

DC<sup>®</sup> AND MARVEL<sup>®</sup> PRESENT:

\$2.50

BAT MAN

VS.

THE INCREDIBLE

HULK

THE BLAZING BATTLE YOU NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE!

ALSO FEATURING THE VILE VILLAINY OF THE **JOKER** AND THE **SHAPER OF WORLDS!**





# THE ORIGIN OF BAT-MAN

CREATED BY BOB KANE

WHEN YOUNG BRUCE WAYNE SAW HIS PARENTS MURDERED BEFORE HIS EYES, HE VOWED TO SPEND HIS LIFE MAKING WAR ON ALL CRIMINALS...



TO THIS END, HE PUSHED HIMSELF TO THE VERY LIMITS OF HUMAN ENDURANCE, TRAINING HIS BODY TO PHYSICAL PERFECTION--



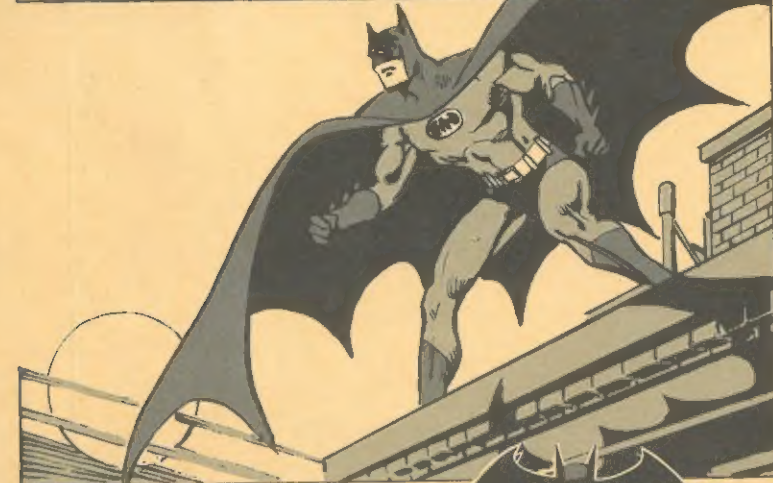
--AND HONING HIS MIND TO RAZOR SHARPNESS, BECOMING A TOP CRIMINOLOGIST AND A MASTER OF DEDUCTIVE REASONING...

HE DEVOTED HIMSELF TO THE ART OF DISGUISE, UNTIL HE WAS VIRTUALLY A HUMAN CHAMELEON WHO COULD ASSUME A THOUSAND DIFFERENT FACES--



--AND HE DEVELOPED A UNIQUE UTILITY BELT, STOCKING IT WITH THE VARIOUS WEAPONS HE WOULD NEED TO AID HIM IN HIS NOBLE CRUSADE...

NOW, BY DAY, HE POSES AS A MILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY-PHILANTHROPIST, CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESTIGIOUS WAYNE FOUNDATION--



--WHILE, BY NIGHT, HE IS TRANSFORMED INTO A WEIRD FIGURE OF THE SHADOWS... A DARK AVENGER OF EVIL...



# THE ORIGIN OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK

CREATED BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

WHEN DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER ATTEMPTED TO RESCUE A RECKLESS TEENAGER WHO HAD WANDERED ONTO THE TEST SITE OF THE TOP-SECRET GAMMA-BOMB--



--HE INSTEAD BECAME A VICTIM OF HIS OWN CREATION, BATHED IN UNIMAGINABLE ENERGIES AS THE GAMMA-BOMB EXPLODED!



NOW, IN TIMES OF STRESS, WHEN HIS PULSE QUICKENS AND HIS HEART POUNDS, THE RUSH OF ADRENALIN TRIGGERS A BIZARRE TRANSFORMATION--

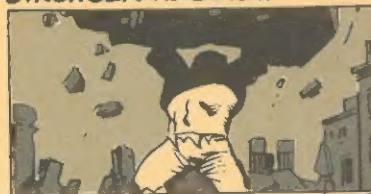


--TURNING THE FRAIL BUT BRILLIANT PHYSICIST INTO SEVEN FEET, ONE THOUSAND POUNDS OF RAGING PRIMORDIAL FURY--



--A MONSTROUS MAN-BRUTE POSSESSED OF SEEMINGLY-LIMITLESS POWER--FOR THE Madder he gets, the STRONGER he gets...

AND YET, THIS BRUTISH EXTERIOR HIDES A BEFOGGED MIND OF CHILDISH SIMPLICITY, A SPIRIT WHICH SEEKS ONLY TO BE LEFT IN PEACE...



THIS, THEN, IS BRUCE BANNER'S CURSE--FORCED TO SHARE HIS LIFE WITH THE MIGHTIEST MONSTER ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH...



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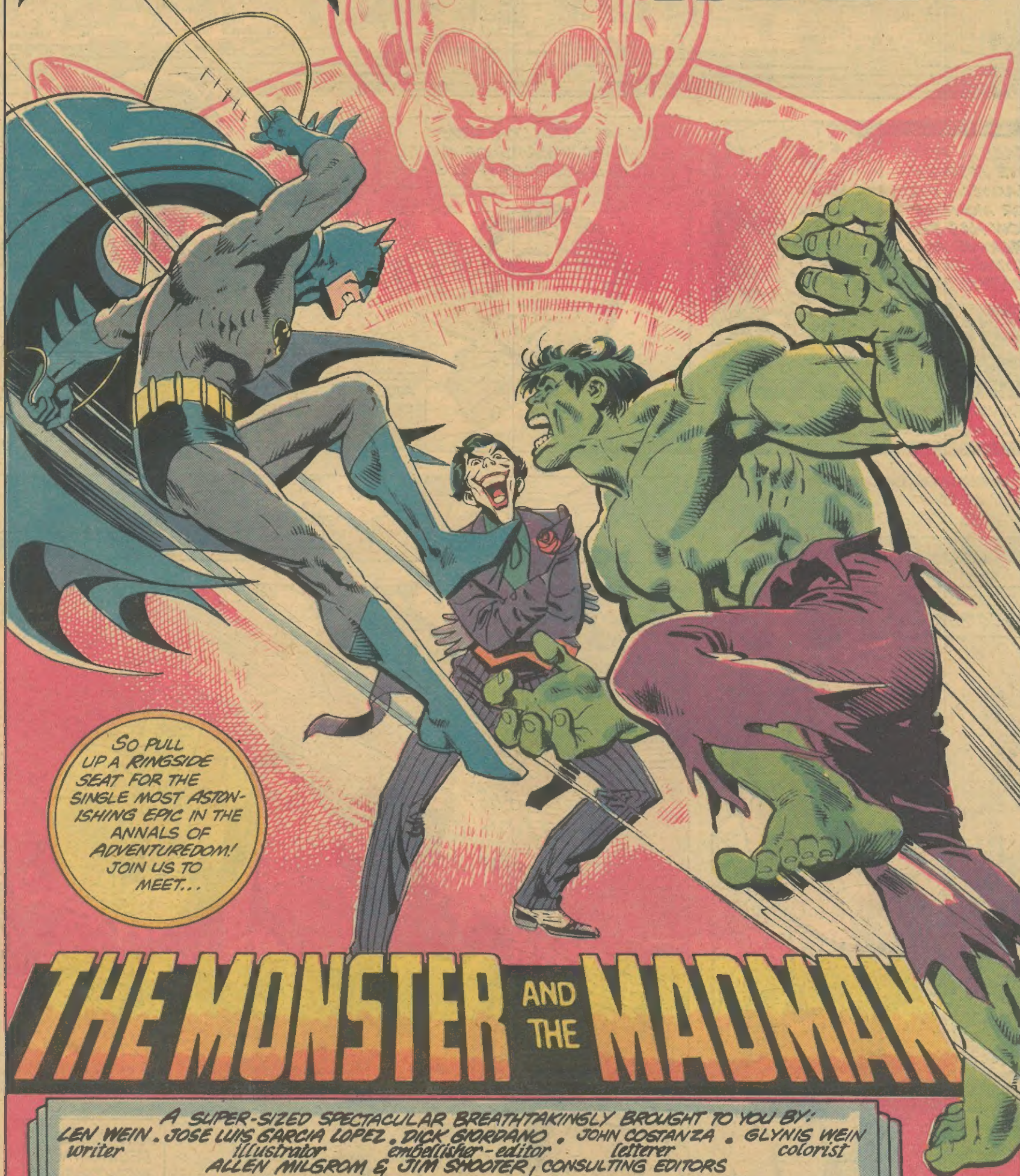


DC COMICS AND MARVEL COMICS PROUDLY PRESENT:

**BAT MAN**

...IN A HISTORY-MAKING  
CONFRONTATION WITH THE  
MIGHTIEST MAN-BRUTE TO  
EVER WALK THE EARTH...

THE  
INCREDIBLE  
**HULK**



SO PULL  
UP A RINGSIDE  
SEAT FOR THE  
SINGLE MOST ASTON-  
ISHING EPIC IN THE  
ANNALS OF  
ADVENTUREDOM!  
JOIN US TO  
MEET...

# THE MONSTER AND THE MADMAN

A SUPER-SIZED SPECTACULAR BREATHTAKINGLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY:  
LEN WEIN • JOSE LUIS GARCIA LOPEZ • DICK GIORDANO • JOHN COSTANZA • GLYNIS WEIN  
writer • illustrator • embellisher-editor • letterer • colorist  
ALLEN MILGROM & JIM SHOOTER, CONSULTING EDITORS  
WITH THANKS TO MARY WOLFMAN & MIKE DECARLO FOR THEIR HELP



# PROLOGUE:

THE TEMPERATURE HIT 90° THIS HOT SUMMER'S DAY IN GOTHAM CITY-- AND THE OCCASIONAL ERRANT BREEZE WHICH NOW WHISPERS DOWN THE BENIGHTED STREETS DOES LITTLE TO DISPEL THE OPPRESSIVE HUMIDITY WHICH MAKES EVEN SLEEP A MOIST EFFORT...

CASE IN POINT: ONE HARVEY MAXWELL, WHO FOR MONTHS NOW HAS BEEN TALKING ABOUT BUYING AN AIR CONDITIONER--

--AND NOW IS PAYING THE PRICE OF HIS PROCRASTINATION.

TOSSING FITFULLY, HARVEY SUMMONS DREAMS OF ARCTIC ICE AND KEENING WINDS--

--IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE THE SWELTERING HEAT!

AN EFFORT THAT SUCCEEDS--

EH?

--BEYOND HARVEY'S WILDEST EXPECTATIONS!

NO! THIS AIN'T POSSIBLE--!

TELL ME I'M STILL DREAMIN'!

'CAUSE IF I'M AWAKE--

--THEN I'VE GOTTA BE OUT OF MY MIND!!

AND THUS BEGINS THE NIGHTMARE!



THE RIVOLI THEATRE,  
ON GOTHAM'S UPPER  
EAST SIDE--



--WHERE SCORES OF 'B'  
MOVIE DEVOTEES HAVE  
COME THIS SMOLDERING  
MIDNIGHT TO RELIVE THE  
CELLULOID FANTASIES  
OF THEIR YOUTH...



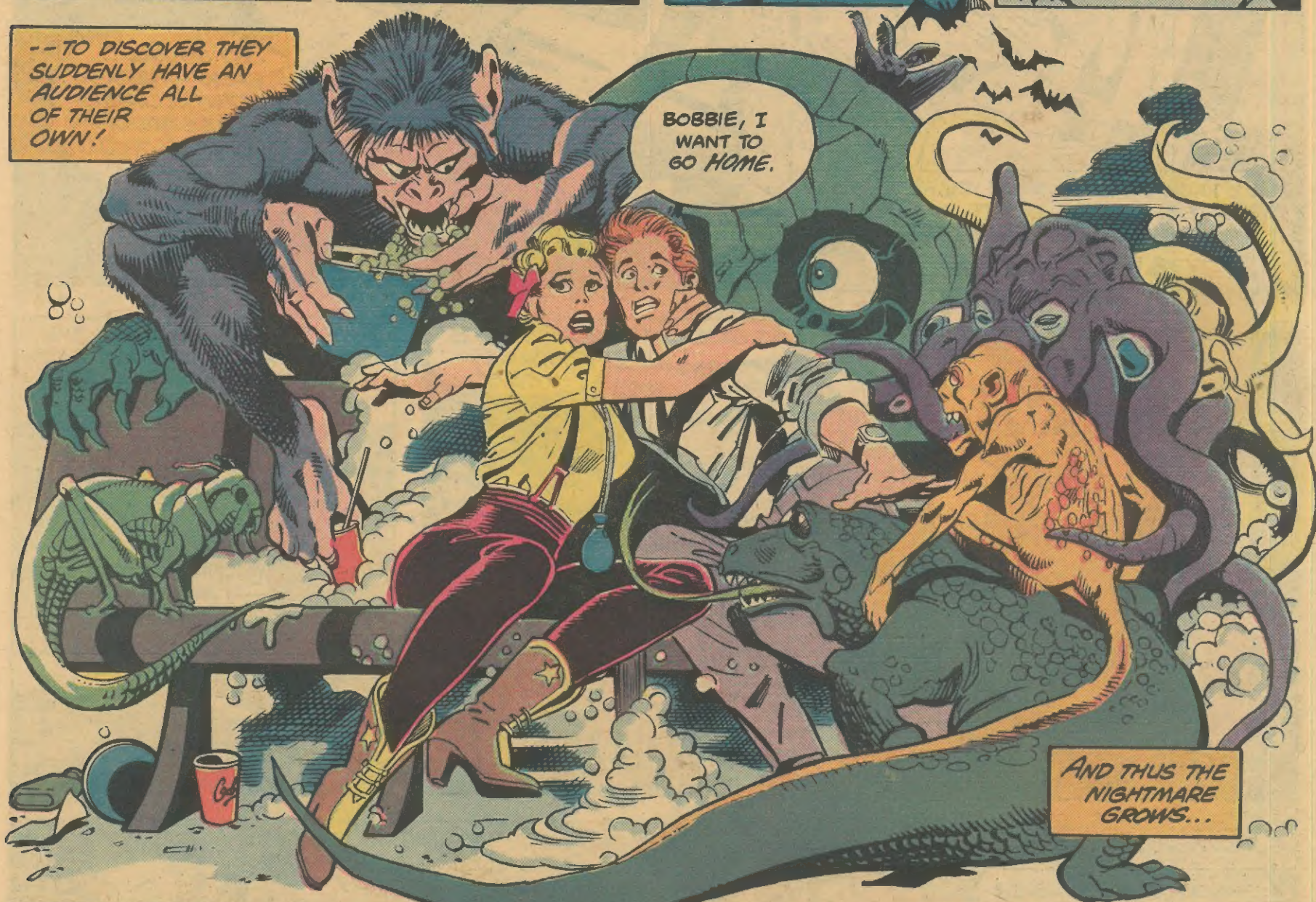
BUT WHILE MOST IN THE  
AUDIENCE SIT WITH THEIR  
EYES FIXED ON THE  
SCREEN, THERE ARE  
SOME WHO HAVE EYES  
ONLY FOR EACH OTHER...



THAT IS, UNTIL THEY  
OPEN THOSE STARRY  
EYES FOR ONE BRIEF  
MOMENT--

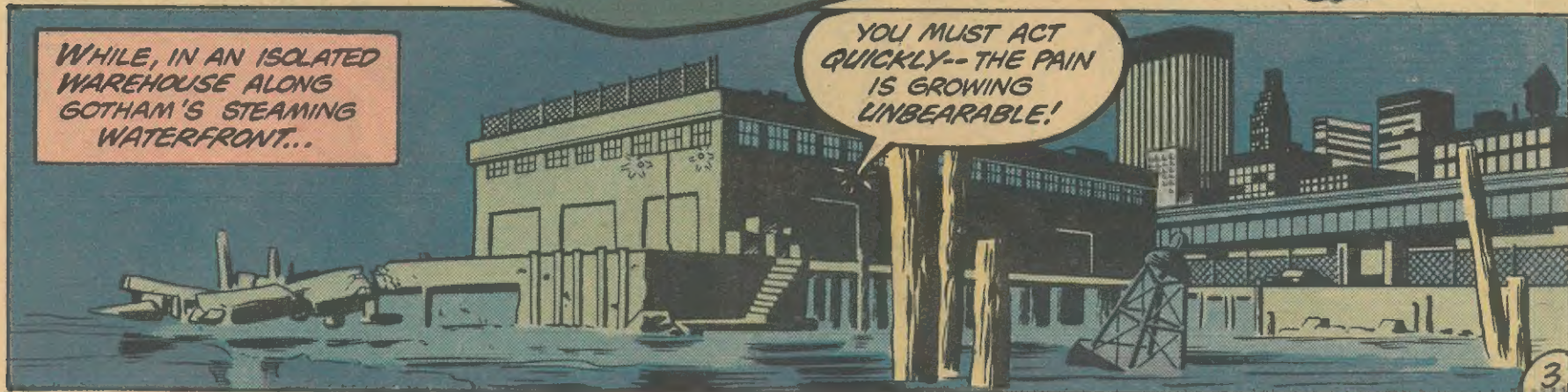


--TO DISCOVER THEY  
SUDDENLY HAVE AN  
AUDIENCE ALL  
OF THEIR  
OWN!



AND THUS THE  
NIGHTMARE  
GROWS...

WHILE, IN AN ISOLATED  
WAREHOUSE ALONG  
GOTHAM'S STEAMING  
WATERFRONT...





HAVE I EVER  
DISAPPOINTED  
YOU, PAL?

WHATEVER ELSE MAY  
CHANGE IN THIS  
INCONSTANT WORLD OF  
OURS, ONE THING  
REMAINS CERTAIN--

--THE JOKER  
ALWAYS DELIVERS!

SO JUST LAY  
BACK--RELAX--  
AND PUT YOURSELF  
IN THESE TRUSTY  
VELVET-GLOVED  
HANDS!

I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE  
AFTER, AND I'LL GET IT  
FOR YOU...

...BUT  
THEN,  
FRIEND,  
I'D BETTER  
GET MINE!

GO QUICKLY, JOKER--TIME IS  
RUNNING  
OUT!

ISN'T IT  
ALWAYS?

COME  
ALONG,  
BOYS-- WE  
HAVE WORK  
TO DO!

LIKE TWO-LEGGED RATS, THE  
CLOWN PRINCE OF CRIME AND  
HIS COHORTS MOVE THROUGH  
THE DOCKSIDE SHADOWS--

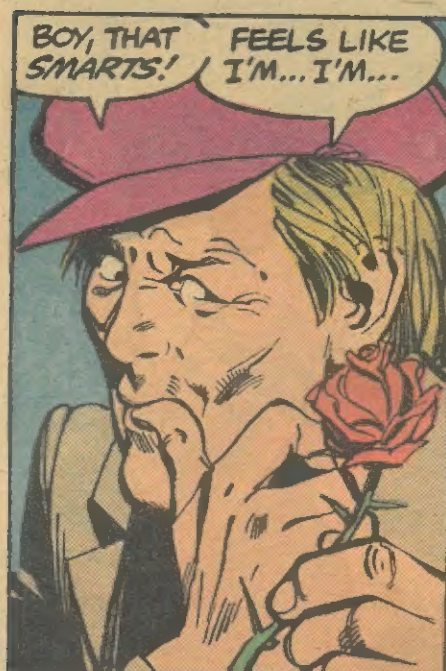
--MUTTERING AS THEY GO...

Y'KNOW, I AIN'T NEVER  
SEEN THE BOSS LIKE  
THIS--!

IT'S ALMOST  
LIKE HE'S  
SCARED 'A THAT  
FREAK IN THE  
WAREHOUSE.

AH, KENNIE MY BOY, YOU  
REALLY DON'T UNDERSTAND,  
DO YOU?







# CHAPTER ONE: WHEN WAKES THE BEHEMOTH...!

ACCORDING TO HIS SECURITY PASS, HIS NAME IS DAVID BANKS-- HE HAS BEEN EMPLOYED HERE, AT THE BOTHAM CITY BRANCH OF WAYNE RESEARCH, FOR ALMOST A WEEK NOW, PERFORMING ODD JOBS AND GENERALLY DOING THE DONKEY WORK--

-- WHICH IS AN ALMOST-CRIMINAL WASTE OF HIS TALENTS!

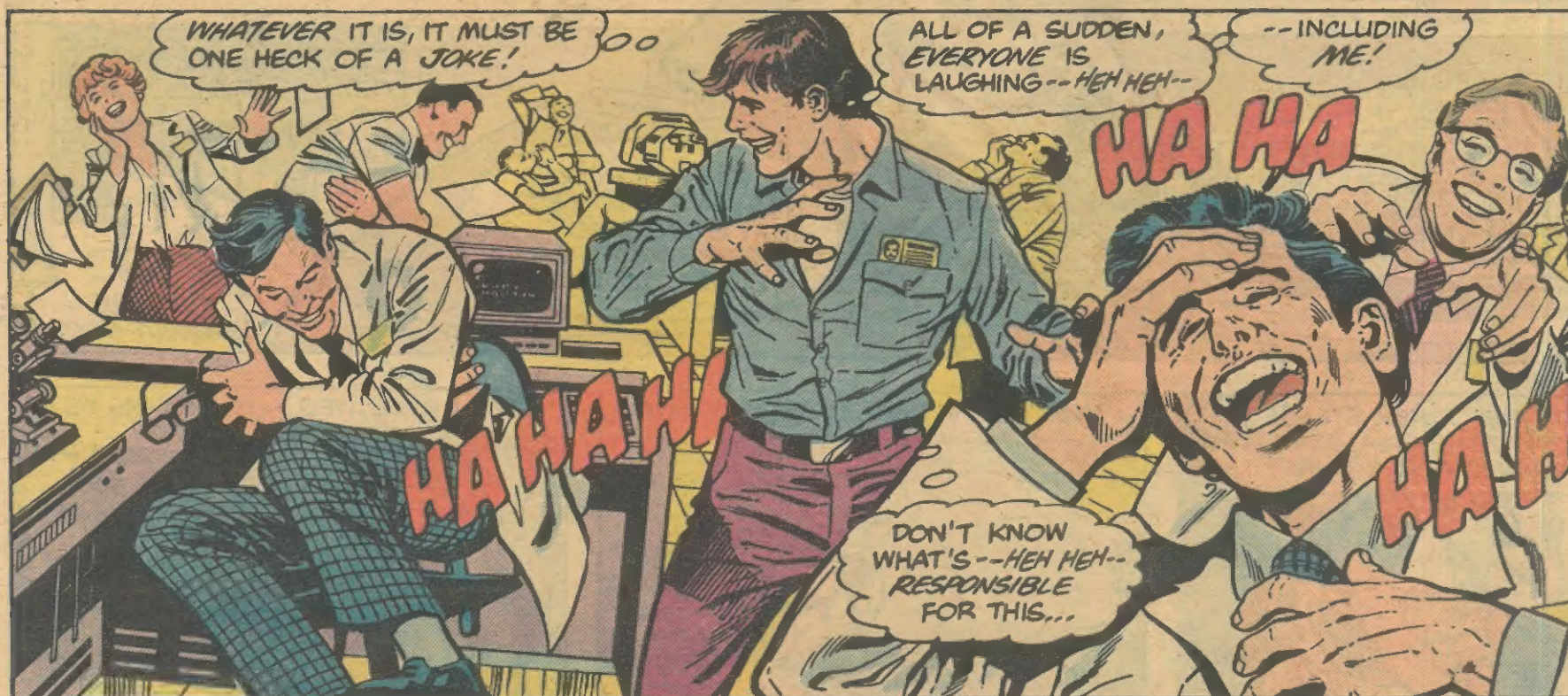
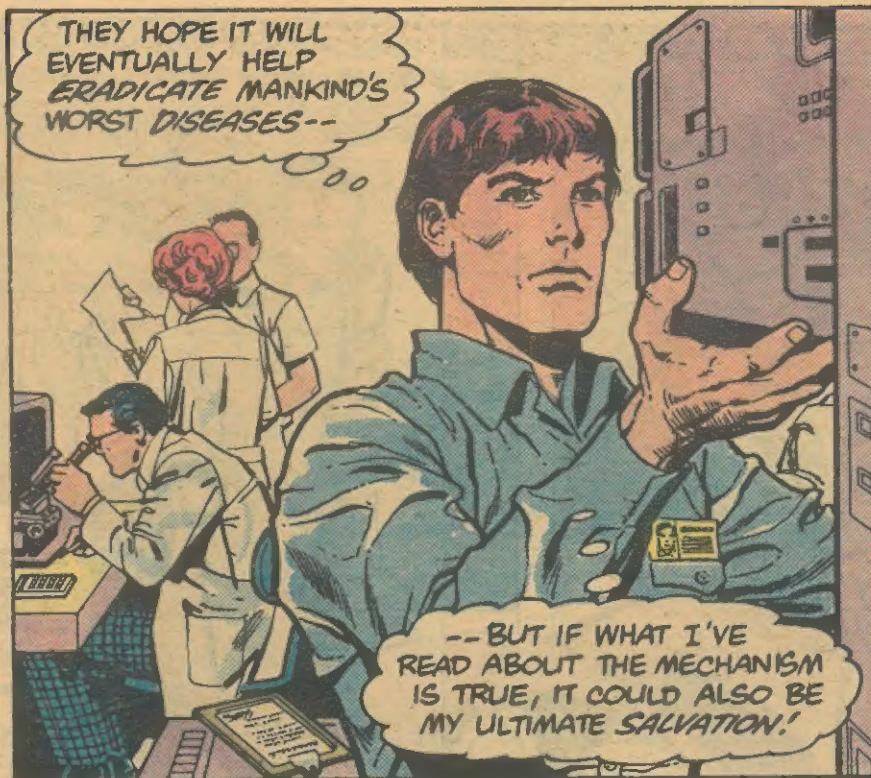
FOR, IN TRUTH, HE IS DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER, UNQUESTIONABLY THE WORLD'S FOREMOST AUTHORITY ON THE EFFECTS OF GAMMA RADIATION--

-- AND A MAN WHO DWELLS FOREVER IN THE SHADOW OF A HORROR HE CANNOT CONTROL!

THIS IS NO WAY TO LIVE... HIDING BEHIND FORGED CREDENTIALS... JUMPING AT EVERY SUDDEN SOUND...

... BUT I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE!









MAYBE TOGETHER WE CAN--

--HUH?

LAFAYETTE, I AM HERE!

NO...NOT HIM!

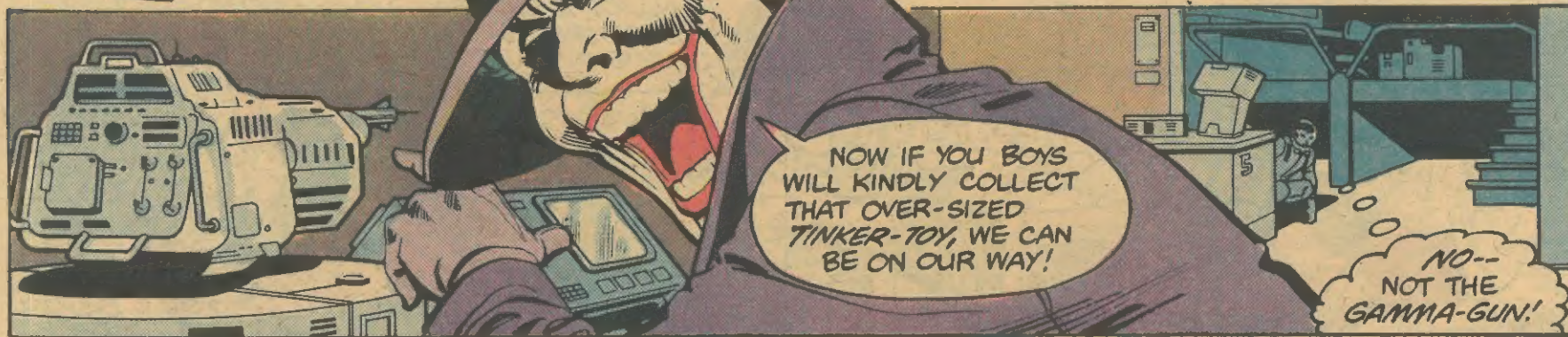


GEE, BOSS-- THAT SPECIAL GAS YA PUMPED INTO THIS JOINT WORKED PERFECT!

AN' WE'RE IMMUNE TO IT JUST LIKE YA SAID!

THE JOKER THINKS OF EVERYTHING, ELMO!

IT'S ONE OF MY MOST ENDEARING QUALITIES!



NOW IF YOU BOYS WILL KINDLY COLLECT THAT OVER-SIZED TINKER-TOY, WE CAN BE ON OUR WAY!

NO-- NOT THE GAMMA-GUN!



IF THE JOKER STEALS THAT, HE STEALS MY CHANCE FOR A CURE!

I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM-- BUT HOW?!



WAIT--! THAT EMERGENCY ALARM--!

IF I CAN JUST REACH IT WITHOUT BEING SPOTTED--!



BUT...

WELL, WELL-- IT APPEARS WE'RE NOT ALONE IN HERE!

BOYS... MAKE US ALONE!

WIT' PLEASURE!

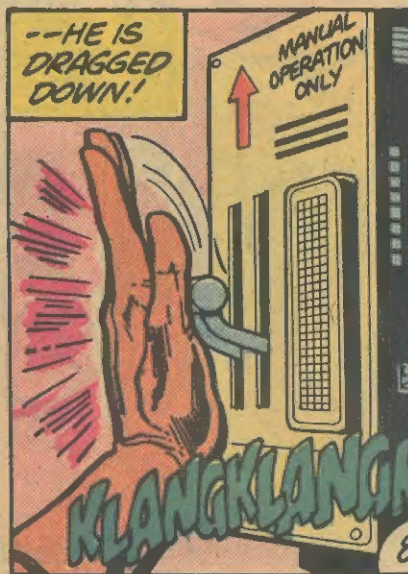


THAT FREAKY SUIT MAY PROTECT YA FROM THE BOSS'S GAS, PUNK--

--BUT IT WON'T SAVE YA FROM US!

THE ALARM--! HAVE TO SOUND THE ALARM--!

AND EVEN AS BANNER'S QUESTING FINGERS STRAIN TO MAKE CONTACT--



--HE IS DRAGGED DOWN!

MANUAL OPERATION ONLY

KLANGKLANGK



FRANTICALLY, THE FRAIL  
PHYSICIST STRUGGLES  
TO FREE HIMSELF FROM  
HIS ATTACKERS--

--AN ADRENAL RUSH WHICH  
ONCE MORE CHARGES HIS  
GAMMA-IRRADIATED BLOOD--

--HIS HEART  
POUNDING,  
HIS PULSE  
RACING--

--AND THUS  
TRIGGERS  
A MOST  
ASTOUNDING  
TRANSFOR-  
MATION--

--FREEING NOT  
BRUCE BANNER,  
BUT RATHER THE  
RAGING BEAST  
WHO DWELLS  
WITHIN HIM--

--THE BLUDGEONING BEHEMOTH WHO  
WAS BORN IN THE NUCLEAR FURY OF  
A GAMMA-BOMB EXPLOSION--

--THE ALMOST-MINDLESS HALF-  
TON HORROR MEN HAVE COME  
TO CALL...

...THE INCREDIBLE  
**HULK!!**

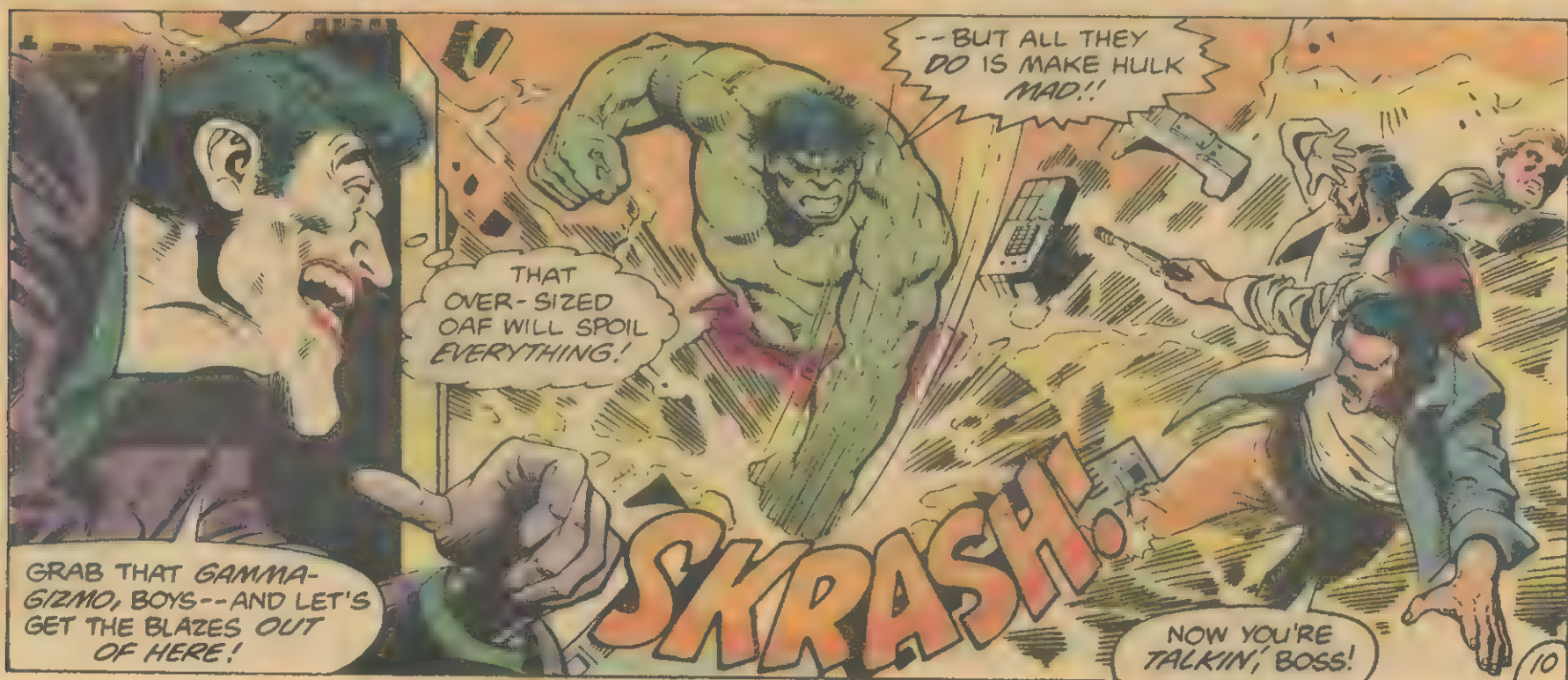
**RRAARRGGGHHH!!**

LEAVE HULK  
ALONE,  
PUNY HUMANS--

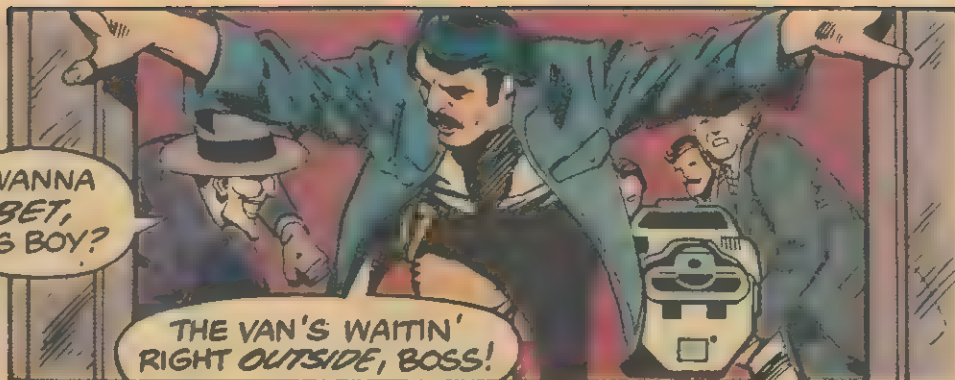
--OR HULK  
WILL  
**SMASH!!**

CRIPES!  
THE PUNK'S  
TURNED INTO  
SOME KINDA--  
MONSTER!

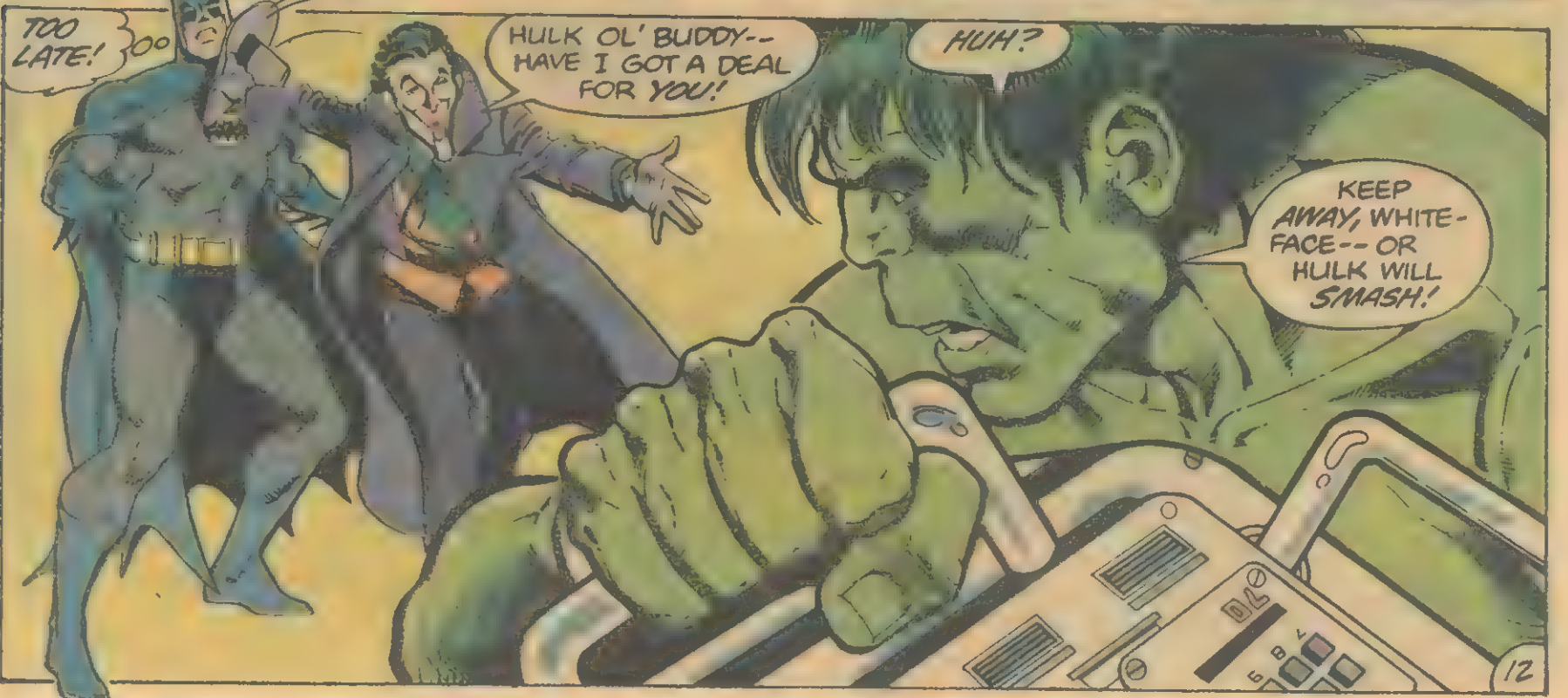
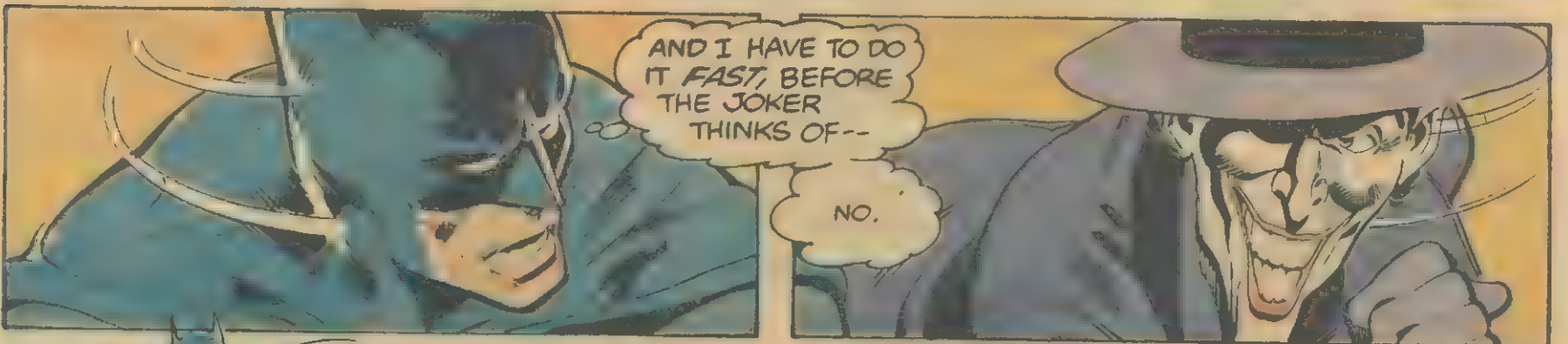
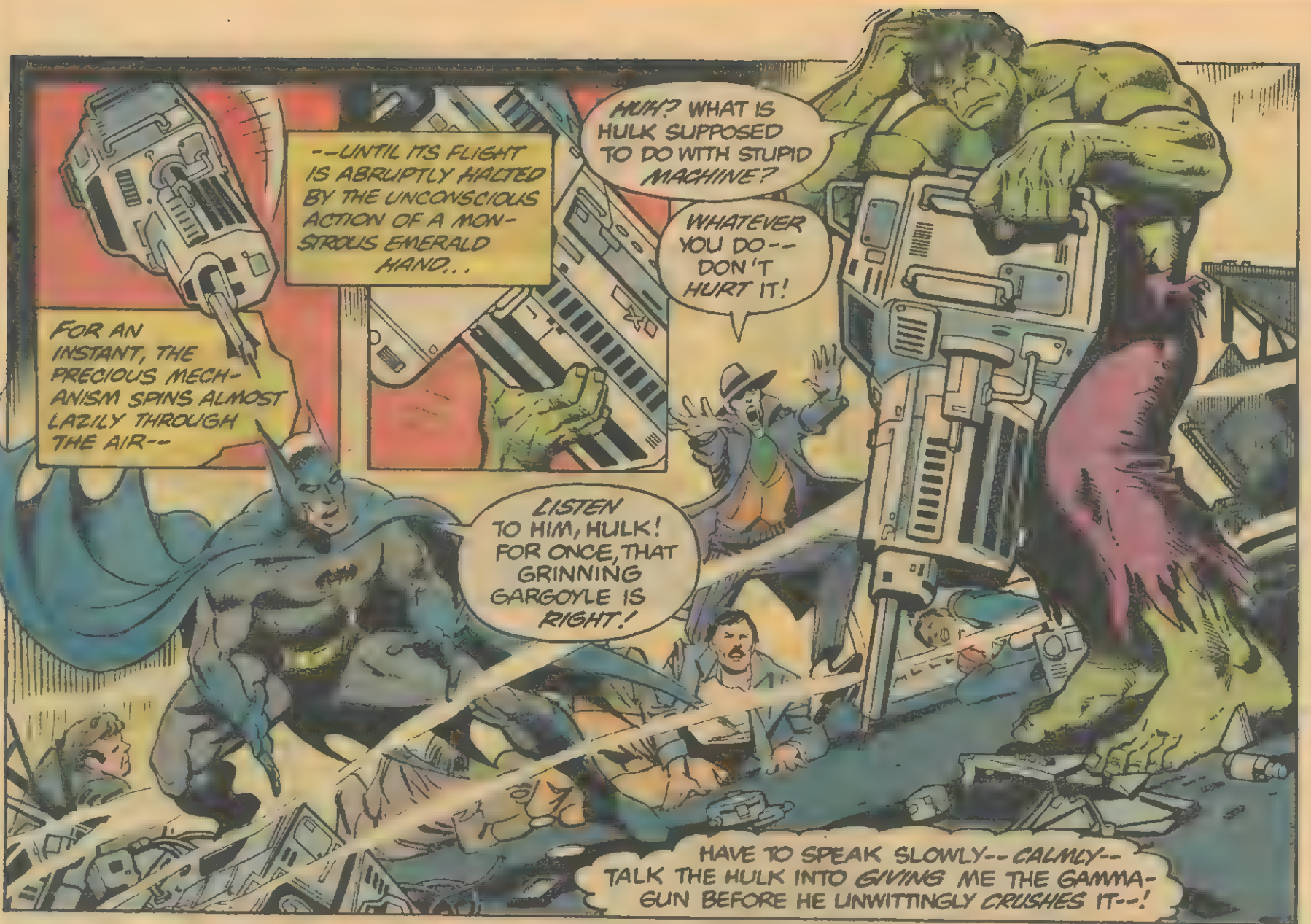




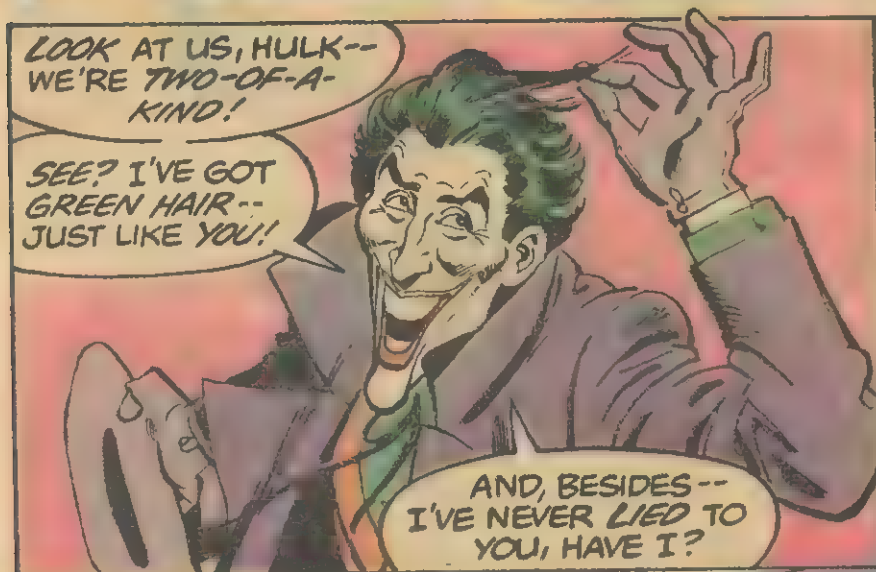
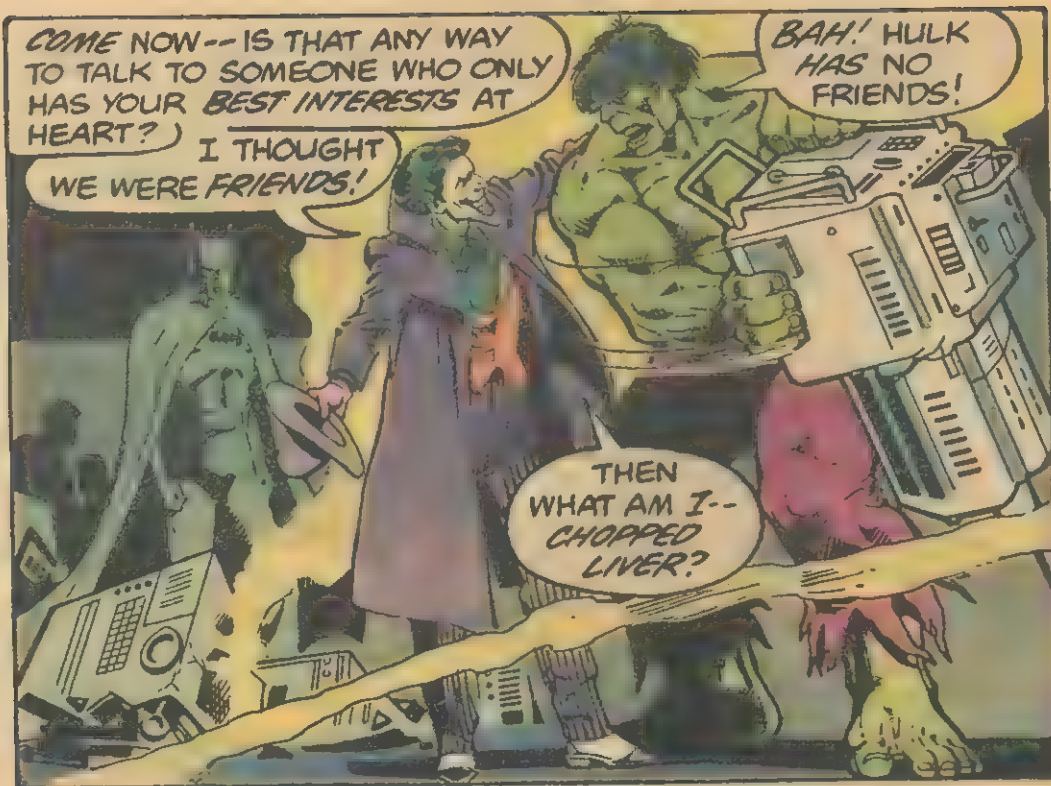




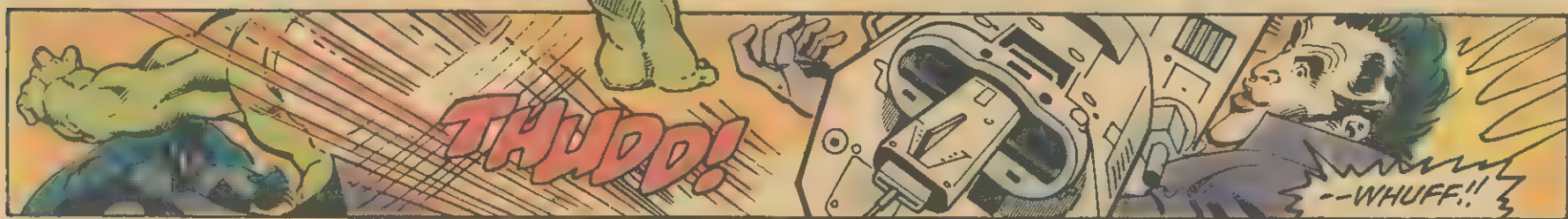




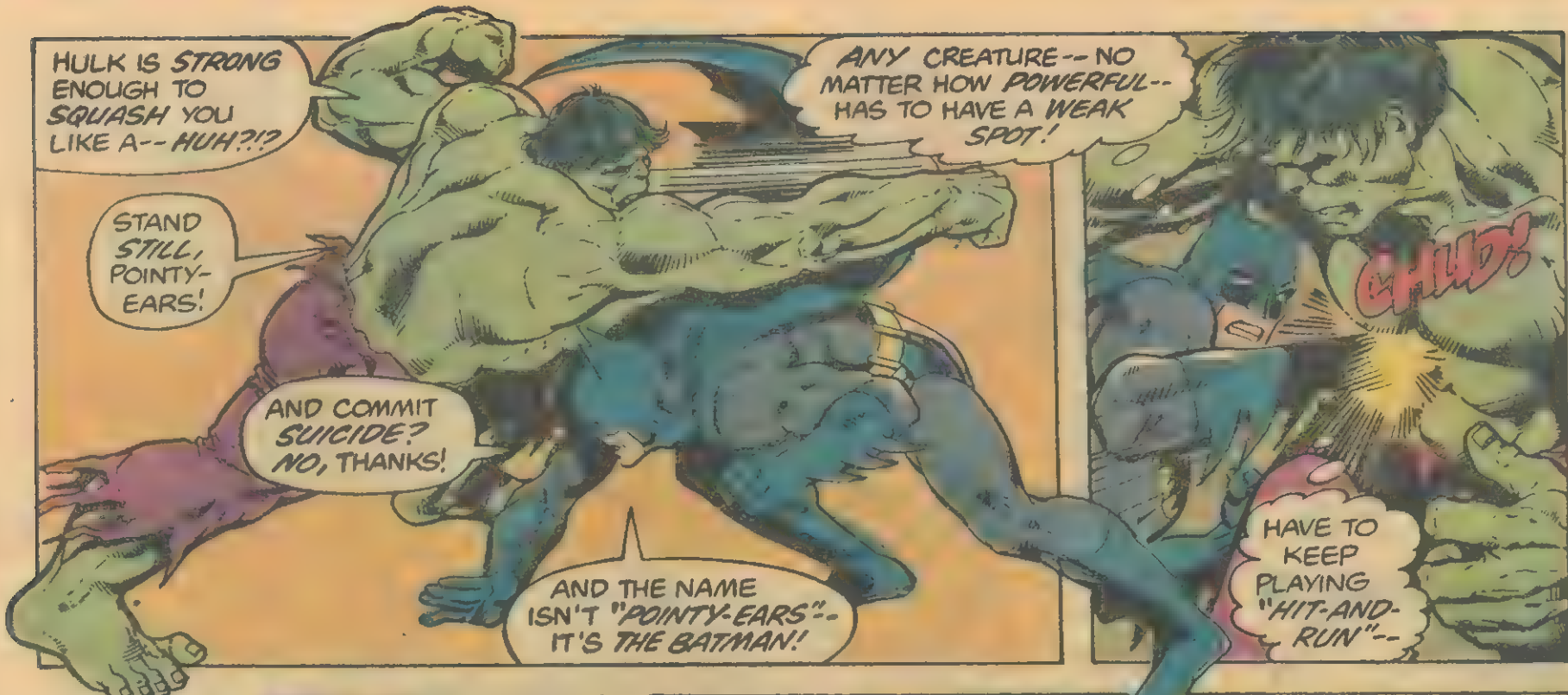












HULK IS STRONG  
ENOUGH TO  
SQUASH YOU  
LIKE A-- MUH?!?

STAND  
STILL,  
POINTY-  
EARS!

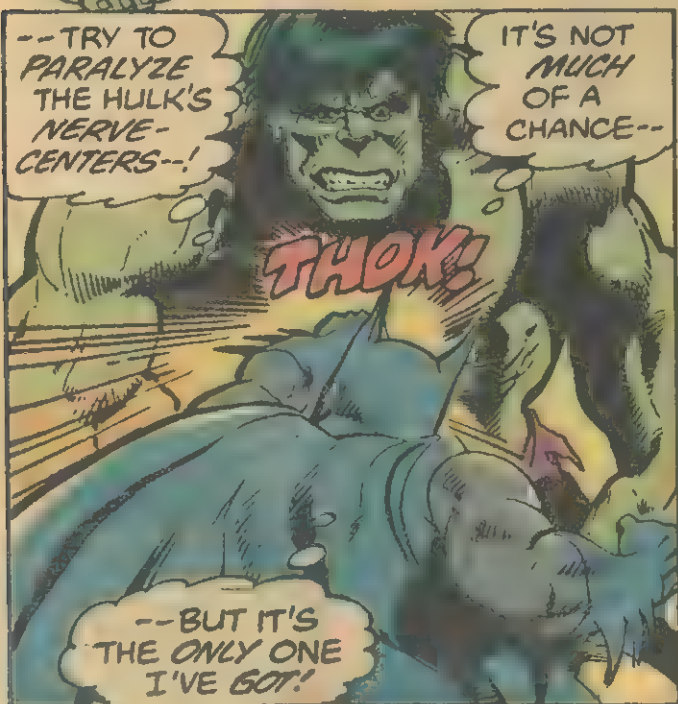
AND COMMIT  
SUICIDE?  
NO, THANKS!

AND THE NAME  
ISN'T "POINTY-EARS"--  
IT'S THE BATMAN!

ANY CREATURE-- NO  
MATTER HOW POWERFUL--  
HAS TO HAVE A WEAK  
SPOT!

CHUD!

HAVE TO  
KEEP  
PLAYING  
"HIT-AND-  
RUN"--



--TRY TO  
PARALYZE  
THE HULK'S  
NERVE-  
CENTERS--!

IT'S NOT  
MUCH  
OF A  
CHANCE--

THOK!

--BUT IT'S  
THE ONLY ONE  
I'VE GOT!



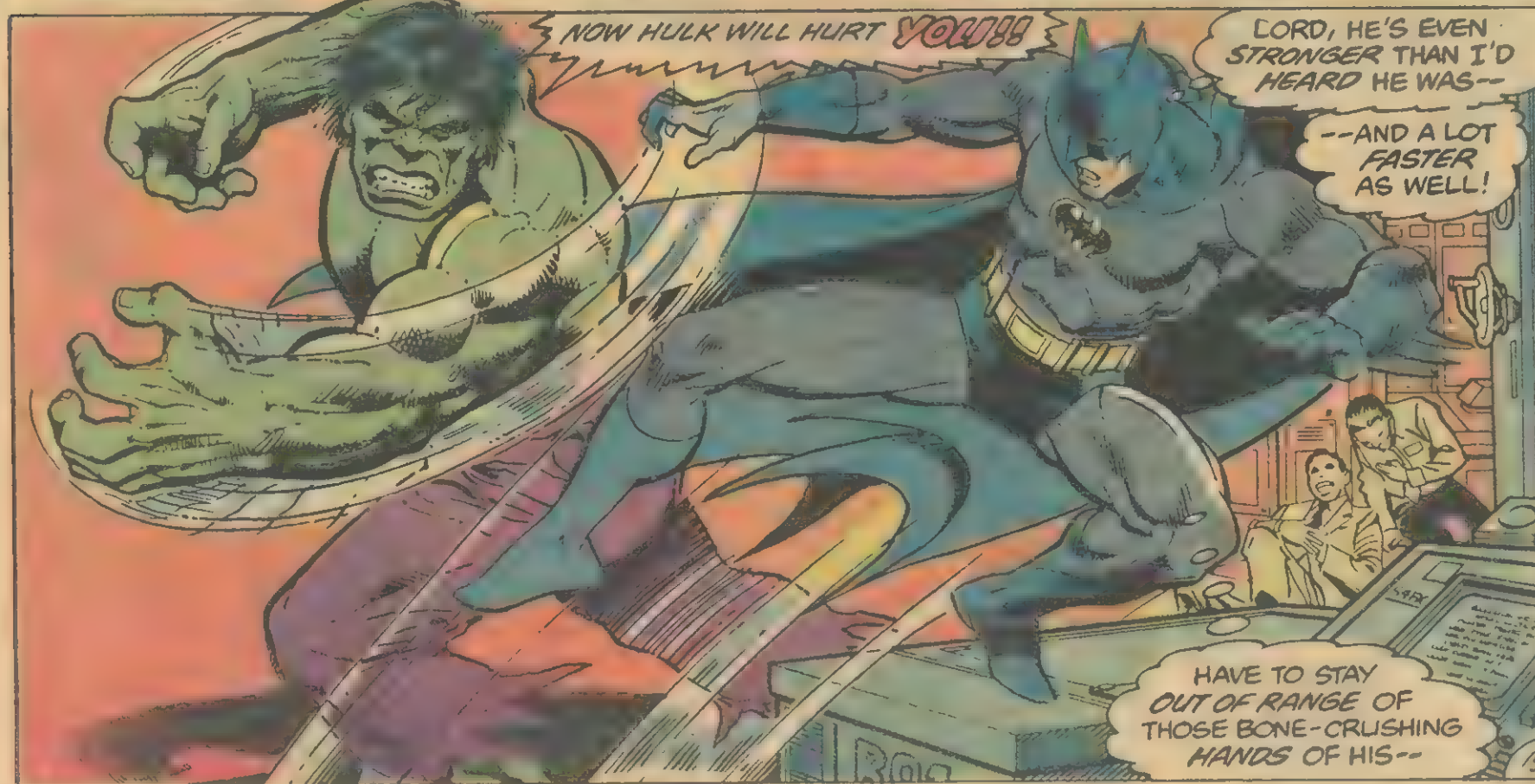
C'MON, YOU  
BIG GREEN  
GORILLA--  
FALL!

WOK!

WHY IN  
BLAZES WON'T  
YOU FALL?

BUT A QUICK GLANCE AT  
THE MAN-BRUTE'S FURIOUS  
FACE ATTESTS TO THE  
FUTILITY OF THE DARK  
KNIGHT'S EFFORTS...

YOU TRIED TO...HURT HULK...



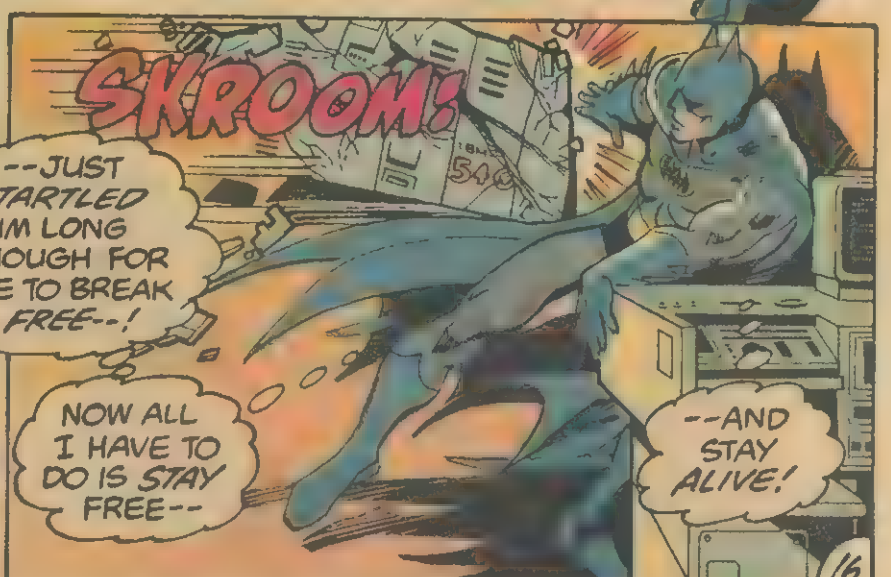
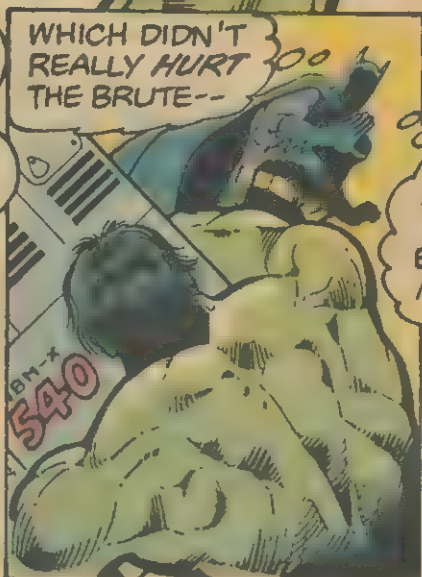
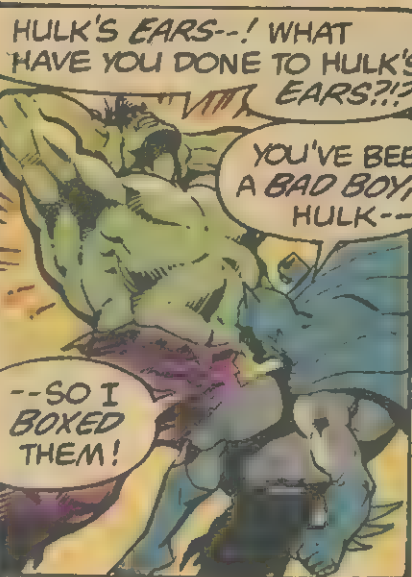
NOW HULK WILL HURT YOU!!

LORD, HE'S EVEN  
STRONGER THAN I'D  
HEARD HE WAS--

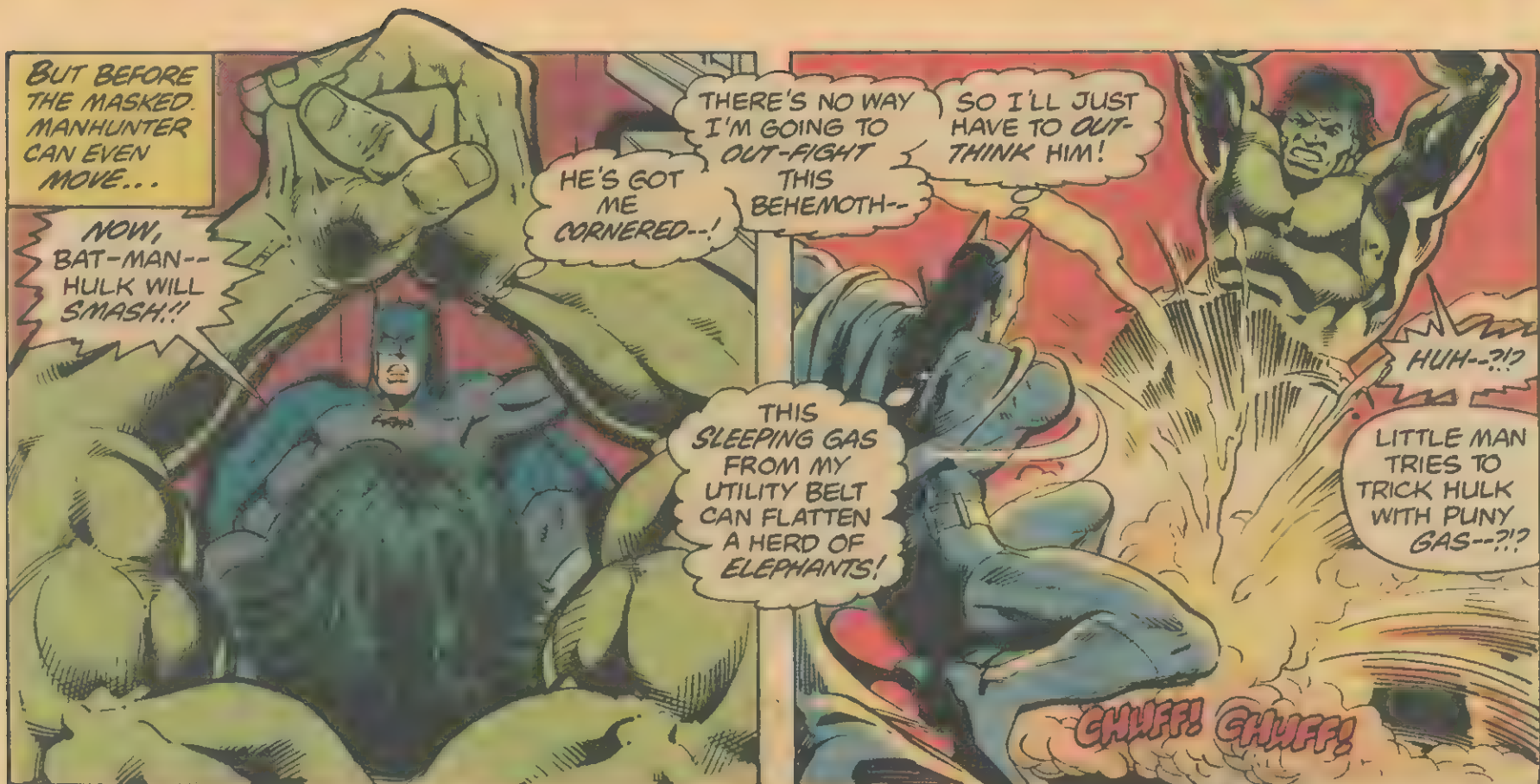
--AND A LOT  
FASTER  
AS WELL!

HAVE TO STAY  
OUT OF RANGE OF  
THOSE BONE-CRUSHING  
HANDS OF HIS--









BUT BEFORE THE MASKED MANHUNTER CAN EVEN MOVE...

NOW, BAT-MAN-- HULK WILL SMASH!!

HE'S GOT ME CORNERED--!

THERE'S NO WAY I'M GOING TO OUT-FIGHT THIS BEHEMOTH--

SO I'LL JUST HAVE TO OUT-THINK HIM!

THIS SLEEPING GAS FROM MY UTILITY BELT CAN FLATTEN A HERD OF ELEPHANTS!

HUH--?!?

LITTLE MAN TRIES TO TRICK HULK WITH PUNY GAS--?!?

CHUFF! CHUFF!



BUT HULK IS TOO SMART FOR BAT-MAN!

GAS CANNOT HURT HULK IF HULK DOES NOT BREATHE IT!

BLAST! MAYBE THERE IS A BRAIN INSIDE THAT THICK GREEN SKULL OF HIS AFTER ALL!

WITH THOSE OVERSIZED LUNGS, THE HULK CAN HOLD HIS BREATH FROM NOW TILL NEXT CHRISTMAS--

HHUUNNFF!!

WHUDDO!

--UNLESS I CAN TAKE THE WIND OUT OF HIS SAILS--

--LIKE THIS!!

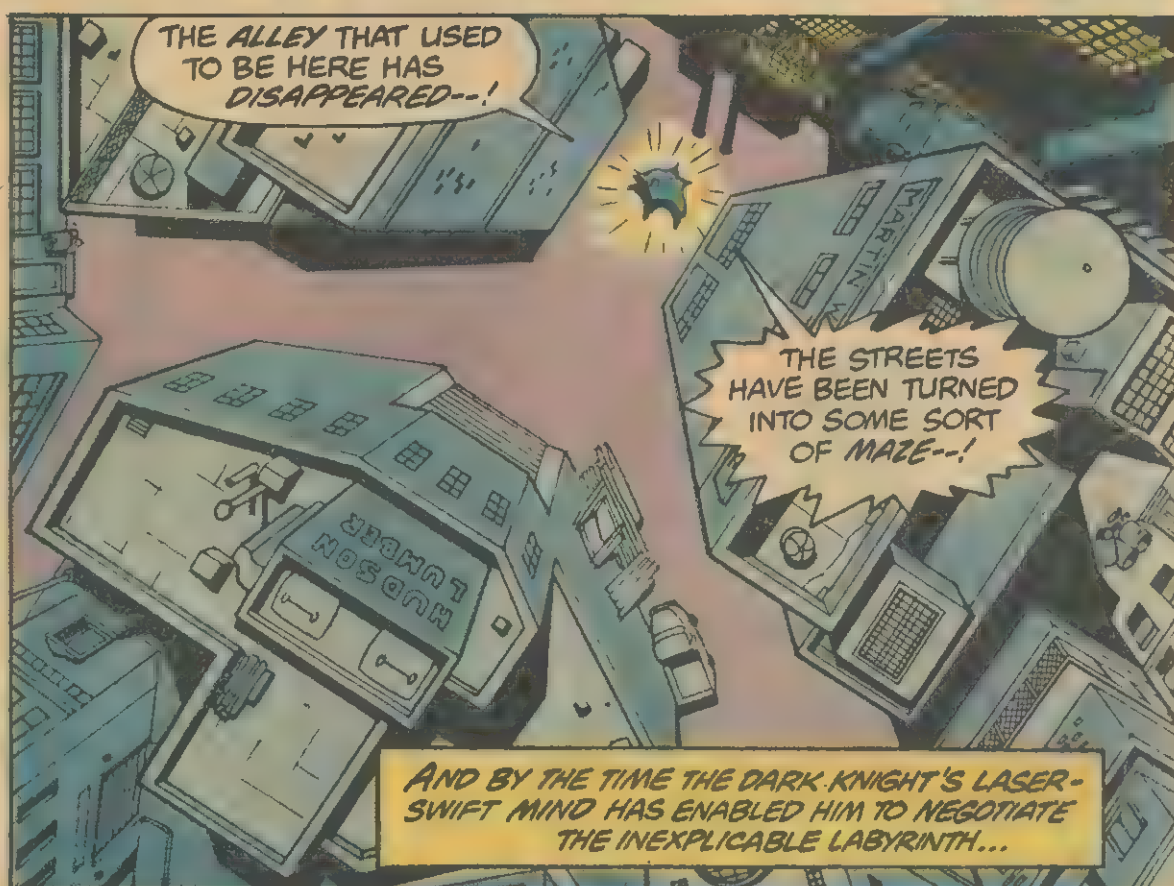
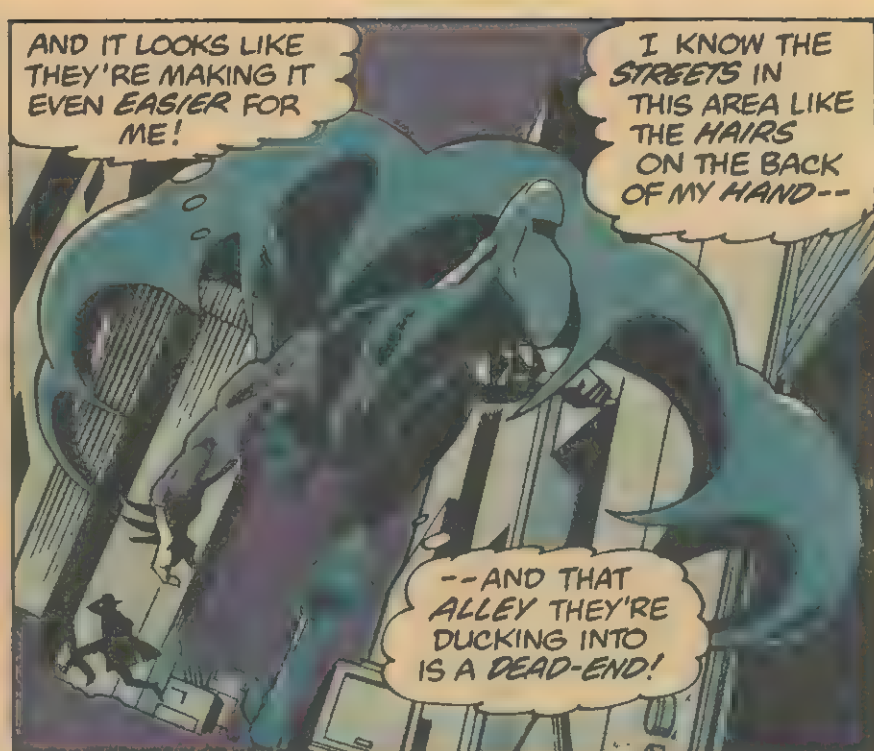
THE POWERFUL KICK TO THE MAN-BRUTE'S SOLAR PLEXUS IS MORE STARTLING THAN PAINFUL, BUT IT ACHIEVES THE DESIRED RESULT:

THE BREATH CRUELLY DRIVEN FROM HIS LUNGS, THE HULK REFLEXIVELY SUCKS IN A FRESH CHESTFUL OF AIR--



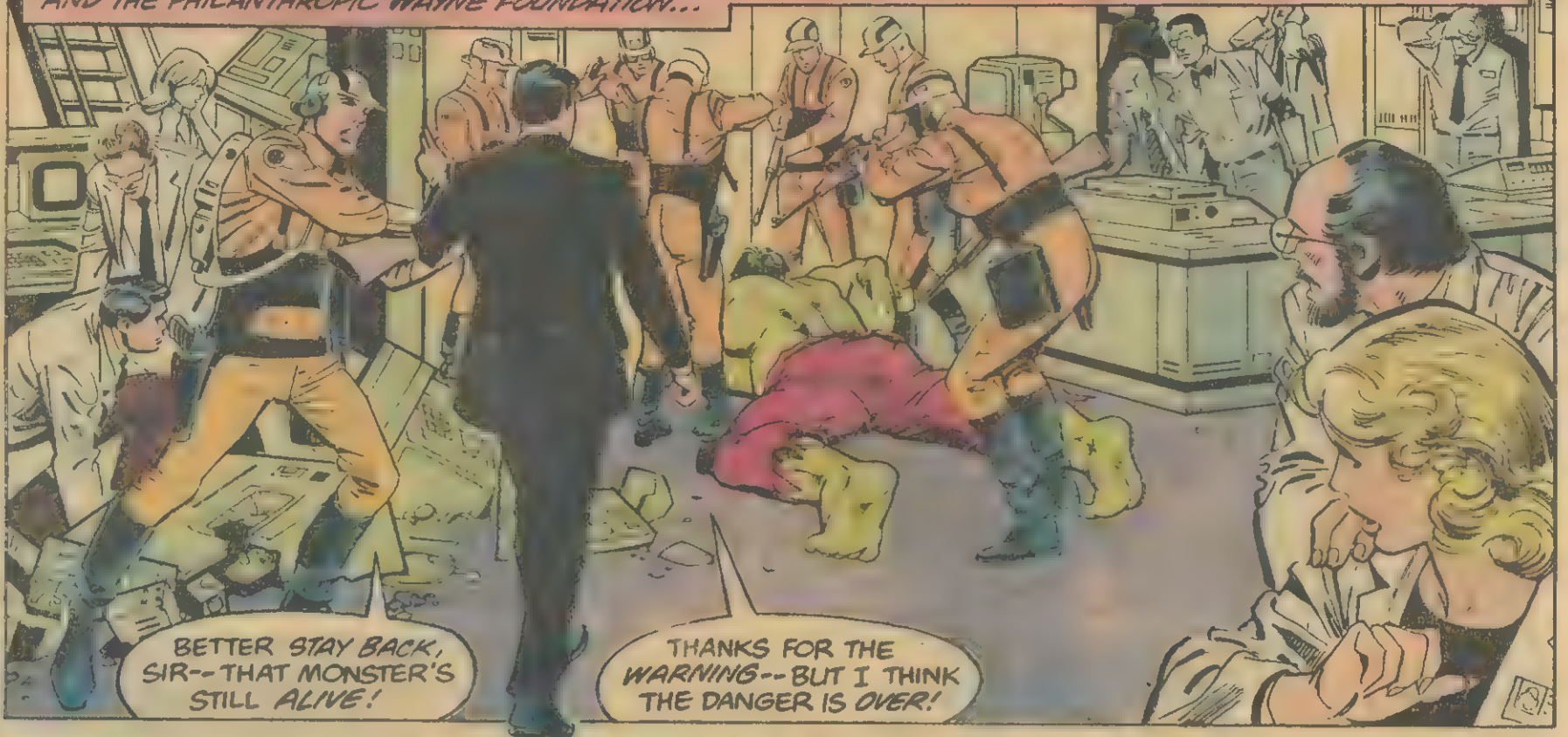








--TO BE REPLACED, MOMENTS LATER, BY BRUCE WAYNE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF WAYNE RESEARCH AND THE PHILANTHROPIC WAYNE FOUNDATION...



BETTER STAY BACK, SIR--THAT MONSTER'S STILL ALIVE!

THANKS FOR THE WARNING--BUT I THINK THE DANGER IS OVER!



FROM EVERYTHING I'VE EVER READ ABOUT THE HULK, HE'S ONLY A MENACE WHEN HE'S THREATENED OR ANGRY--!

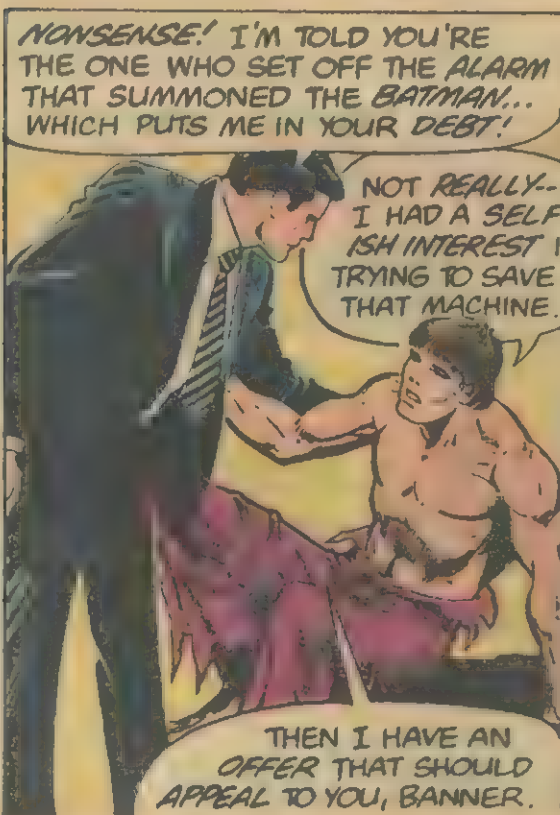
WHEN HE REGAINS HIS CALM...WHEN HIS PULSE AND HEART-BEAT BEGIN TO SLOW...

...HE IS TRANSFORMED ONCE MORE INTO A MAN...

...DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER, I PRESUME?

S-SORRY ABOUT ALL THE TROUBLE, MR. WAYNE...

I'LL PACK MY GEAR--AND GET OUT!



NONSENSE! I'M TOLD YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SET OFF THE ALARM THAT SUMMONED THE BATMAN... WHICH PUTS ME IN YOUR DEBT!

NOT REALLY-- I HAD A SELF-ISH INTEREST IN TRYING TO SAVE THAT MACHINE.

THEN I HAVE AN OFFER THAT SHOULD APPEAL TO YOU, BANNER.



WITH THE PROTOTYPE OF THE GAMMA-GUN STOLEN, I'LL NEED SOMEONE TO SUPERVISE CONSTRUCTION OF ITS REPLACEMENT--

--AND I CAN'T THINK OF ANYONE MORE QUALIFIED THAN YOU!

ME? AFTER ALL THIS? BUT WHY--?

I PREFER TO ONLY HIRE THE BEST.



I APPRECIATE YOUR CONFIDENCE IN ME, MR. WAYNE...

...BUT WHAT ABOUT THE HULK?

DON'T WORRY, MY FRIEND...

...THERE ARE WAYS OF DEALING WITH HIM!



# CHAPTER TWO: "WHEN DREAMS WON'T COME!"

IT IS QUIET ALONG THESE MOON-LIT DOCKS TONIGHT, SAVE FOR THE PERSISTENT LAPPING OF THE RELENTLESS TIDE AGAINST THE MILDEWED PILING--

--AND THE UNSETTLING ECHO OF LAUGHTER HANGING HEAVY IN THE AIR--

--MAD, TRIUMPHANT LAUGHTER!

SEE? DIDN'T I TELL YOU I ALWAYS DELIVER?

HAHAHA

W H A H A



IN ANOTHER FEW SECONDS, MY BOYS WILL HAVE YOUR GAMMA-GIZMO PURRING LIKE A PUSSYCAT...



...SO YOU AND I CAN COMPLETE OUR LITTLE-- AH--BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT!

NO! NOT UNTIL I AM WELL ONCE MORE!

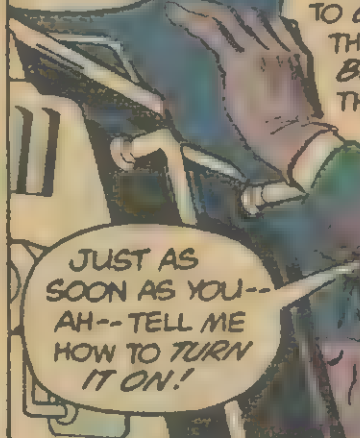


IT'S ALL SET, BOSS!

SPLENDID, ORVILLE!

YOU WANT WELL, MY FRIEND-- YOU'VE GOT IT!

THIS LITTLE BABY IS GUARANTEED TO CURE EVERYTHING FROM BUNIONS TO THE BUBONIC PLAGUE--!

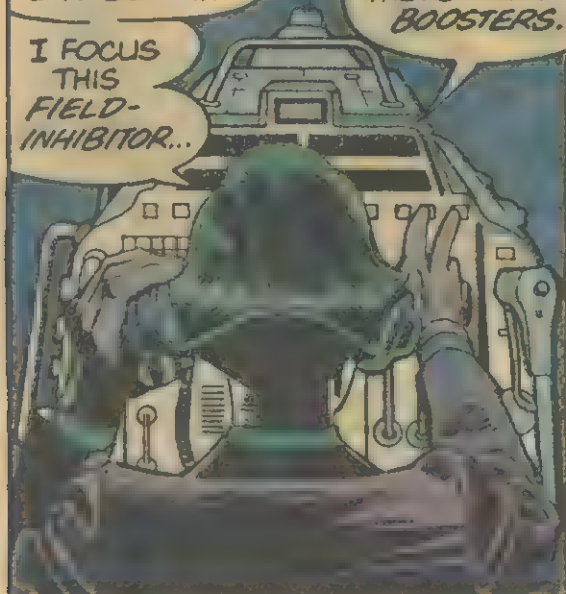


JUST AS SOON AS YOU-- AH--TELL ME HOW TO TURN IT ON!

AND, AFTER SOME RATHER HURRIED, ALMOST-FRANTIC INSTRUCTION...

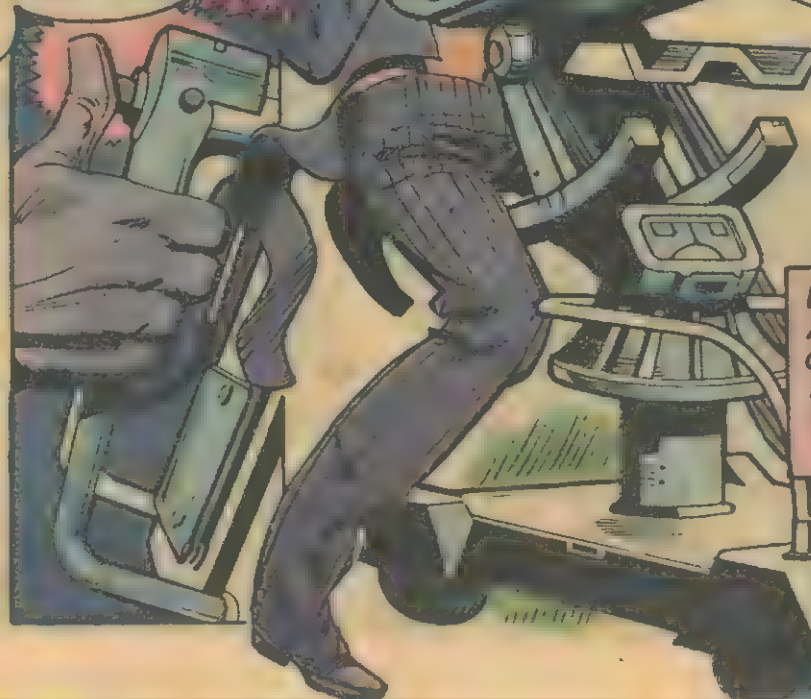
OKAY, I THINK I'VE GOT IT...

I FOCUS THIS FIELD-INHIBITOR...



...ADJUST THESE POWER-BOOSTERS...

...PUNCH THIS LITTLE GREEN BUTTON...




...AND BINGO--

--IT'S FIREWORKS TIME!!

WITH AN ARID HISS A RAMPANT BEAM OF EMERALD ENERGY LANCES FORTH FROM THE PILFERED GAMMA-GUN--





--ENVELOPING THE MONSTROUS, PALE-SKINNED FIGURE WHOSE BULK FAIRLY SEEMS TO FILL THE LIMELIT WAREHOUSE.

FROM THE WAIST UP, THE ALIEN BEHEMOTH SEEMS SOMEWHAT LIKE A MAN; FROM THE WAIST DOWN, HE APPEARS A MACHINE. IN TRUTH, HE IS BOTH OF THESE THINGS--AND, IN TRUTH, HE IS NEITHER!

WHAT HE ACTUALLY IS IS POWER, POWER FAR BEYOND MAN'S MEAGER ABILITY TO IMAGINE SUCH THINGS --WHICH IS, IN ITS WAY, MOST IRONIC!

FOR THOUGH HE IS KNOWN BY MYRIAD DIFFERENT NAMES THROUGHOUT THE LIMITLESS COSMOS, THE NAME HE MOST FAVORS IS...

...THE SHAPER OF WORLDS, HE WHO MAKES DREAMS LIVE!

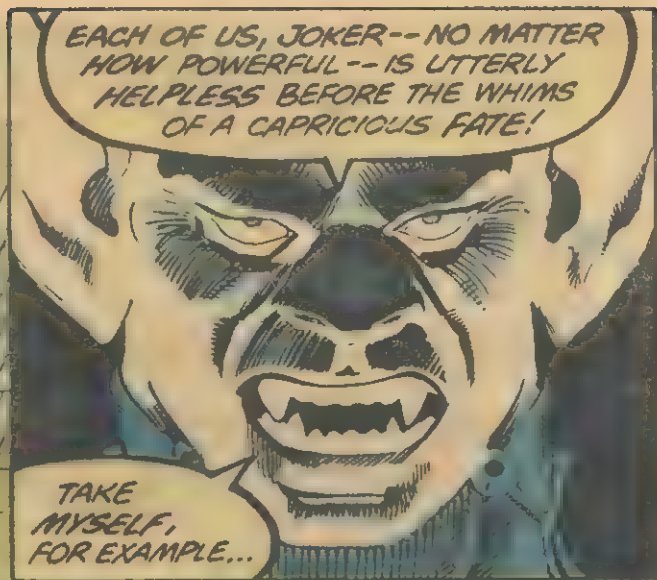




MORE POWER, JOKER-- I MUST HAVE MORE POWER TO OVERCOME THE MADNESS!

ANYTHING YOU SAY, SHAPER OLD SPORT--

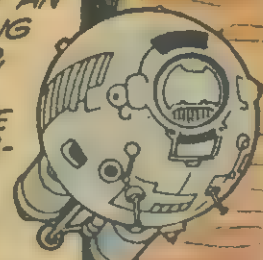
--THOUGH I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW SOMEONE WHO HAS SO MUCH POWER ALREADY COULD'VE GOTTEN HIMSELF INTO SUCH A MESS!



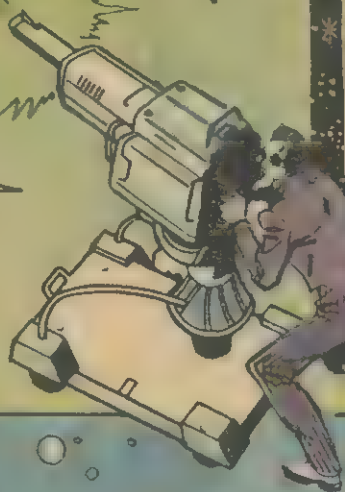
EACH OF US, JOKER-- NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL-- IS UTTERLY HELPLESS BEFORE THE WHIMS OF A CAPRICIOUS FATE!

TAKE MYSELF, FOR EXAMPLE...

"POSSESSED OF AN ALL-CONSUMING URGE TO MOLD, TO BUILD-- I SADLY LACK THE SPARK OF IMAGINATION, THE TALENT FOR CREATIVITY..."



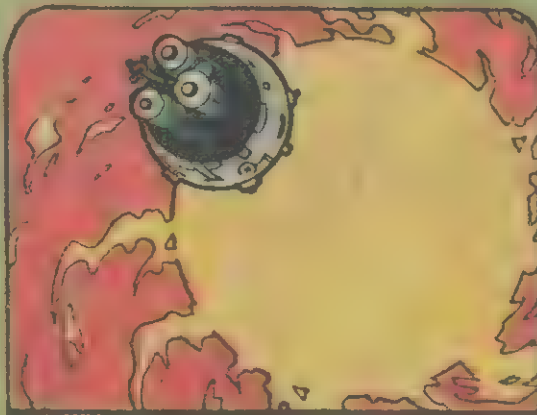
"I AM DENIED THE GIFT OF DREAMS!"



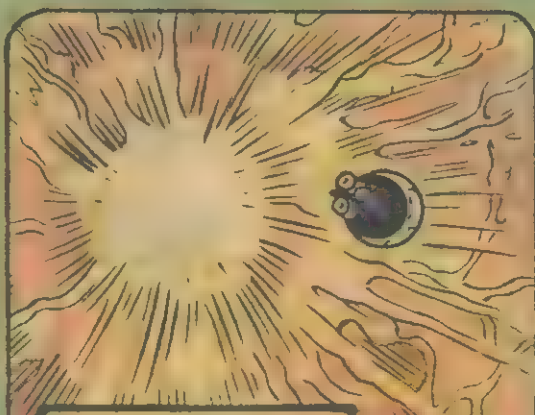
"THUS, I HAVE WANDERED THE UNIVERSE FOR YEARS BEYOND NUMBERING, BECOMING A GALACTIC PARASITE--

--FEEDING OFF THE DREAMS OF OTHER, LESSER BEINGS--

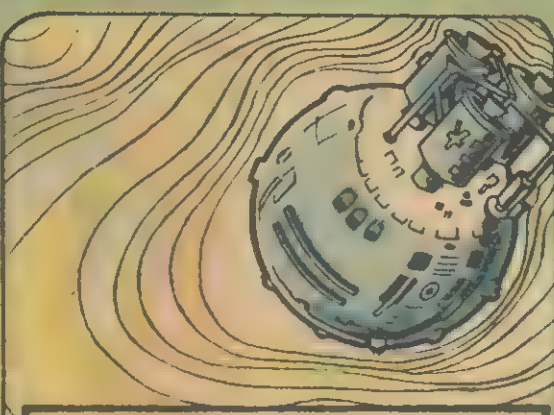
--DREAMS THAT I MADE LIVE!



"I MIGHT HAVE GONE ON FOREVER THAT WAY, HAD I NOT THE MISFORTUNE TO BE PASSING A NAMELESS ROGUE STAR--



--AT THE VERY INSTANT IT WENT NOVA!



"RIPPLING WAVES OF HEAT AND RADIATION BUFFETED MY HAPLESS SPACECRAFT--



"--AND SENT AGONIZING NEEDLES OF UNKNOWN ENERGY SLASHING THROUGH MY BODY!"

"THOUGH NO PERMANENT PHYSICAL DAMAGE WAS DONE ME, THOSE EXTRAORDINARY ENERGIES NONETHELESS HAD THEIR EFFECT--"

"--FOR I SOON FOUND MYSELF LOSING THE ABILITY TO ABSORB THE DREAMS OF OTHERS--"

"--AND WITHOUT THAT NECESSARY OUTLET FOR MY SURGING SHAPING POWERS, I KNEW I WOULD SOON GO MAD--"

"--AYE, AND THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE WITH ME!"

"SEEKING A CURE ULTIMATELY LED ME HERE TO EARTH, WHERE MY WANDERING HAD BROUGHT ME A TIME OR TWO BEFORE..."

"I MANIFESTED THIS WAREHOUSE TO CONCEAL MY STAR-SPANNING CRAFT--"

"--AND THEN I SENT MY MIND QUESTING IN SEARCH OF HELP..."

"BUT THE MINDS I TOUCHED WERE USELESS TO ME, DREAMING SMALL UNIMPORTANT DREAMS--"

"THAT IS WHY I SUMMONED YOU TO ME, JOKER--"

"--AND WHY WE STRUCK OUR BARGAIN!"

SHAPER, OLD SON, IT WILL BE A PLEASURE DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU...

...WON'T IT, BOYS?

"THAT IS, UNTIL MY MIND TOUCHED YOURS!"

"IN YOU, JOKER, I FINALLY FOUND WHAT I HAD SO LONG BEEN SEARCHING FOR--"

--A MIND UNIQUE IN ALL THE UNIVERSE!"



AND I'VE FULFILLED MY PART OF THE BARGAIN, SHAPER-- I'VE BROUGHT YOU THE GIZMO YOU THINK WILL CURE YOU!

NOW WHEN WILL YOU START FULFILLING YOUR PART?

WHEN THE CURE IS COMPLETE, JOKER-- AND I AM ONCE MORE WHOLE!

THE SOONER THE BETTER, BIG GUY.

I DO HAVE OTHER--AH-- WORLDS TO CONQUER, SO TO SPEAK.

I STILL DON'T GET IT, BOSS-- WHY ARE YOU HELPIN' THAT SPACE FREAK?

YOURS IS NOT TO REASON WHY, ORVILLE-- BUT I WOULD THINK THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUS!

BOYS, WHO IS THE CRAZIEST MAN ON EARTH?

WHY, UH-- YOU ARE BOSS... HANDS DOWN!

PRECISELY-- AND I INTEND TO KEEP IT THAT WAY!

IF THE SHAPER FINALLY POPS HIS CORK, EVERYONE IN THE UNIVERSE WILL BE AS CRAZY AS I AM...

AND WE CAN'T HAVE THAT NOW, CAN WE? NO, WE CAN'T HAVE THAT AT ALL!

IN THE VALLEY OF THE SANE, IT'S THE INSANE MAN WHO'S KING!

SAY WHAT?

THE GAMMA-GUN, JOKER-- TURN IT OFF! IT'S FAILED-- FAILED MISERABLY!

I AM STILL LOSING MY DREAM-ABSORBING POWERS... STILL LOSING MY MIND!

GEE, WHAT'RE WE SUPPOSED TO DO NOW, BOSS?

I WAS RATHER HOPING YOU WOULDN'T ASK ME THAT, ELMO.

BUT ALREADY THE LITTLE TWISTED WHEELS IN THE CRIME CLOWN'S MIND ARE TURNING... TURNING...



# CHAPTER THREE: WHEN THE SEA CHURNS GREEN...!

ANCHORED JUST BEYOND THE THREE-MILE MARK OFF THE SHORES OF GOTHAM CITY, THIS SUPER-TANKER WAS ONCE THE FLAGSHIP OF THE WAYNE ENTERPRISES LINE--

--BUT TODAY, IT SERVES ANOTHER, MORE INTRICATE PURPOSE!

FOR, ITS SPRAWLING INTERIOR HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A COMPLEX OF SOPHISTICATED LABORATORIES--

--INCLUDING THIS ONE CURRENTLY DIRECTED BY THE DEDICATED DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER...

AND TRIPLE-CHECKED IT, DOCTOR.

HAVE YOU DOUBLE-CHECKED THAT ENERGY-CONVERTER?

THERE ISN'T A SPECK OF DUST IN THIS LAB THAT HASN'T BEEN TESTED, RE-TESTED, THEN TESTED AGAIN TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT--

--OH LORD.

YOU CLUMSY OAF! DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS PROJECT MEANS TO ME?

IF YOU'VE DAMAGED THAT ENERGY-CONVERTOR, WE'RE FINISHED!

I-I'M SORRY, DR. BANNER--!

SORRY? WHY, I COULD... COULD...

NO! WHAT AM I DOING--?

MUSTN'T LOSE CONTROL OF MYSELF LIKE THAT!

CAN'T RISK TRIGGERING THE CHANGE AGAIN-- NOT HERE-- NOT NOW!

HAVE... TO... KEEP... CALM...

--BUT MERCIFULLY BRIEF!

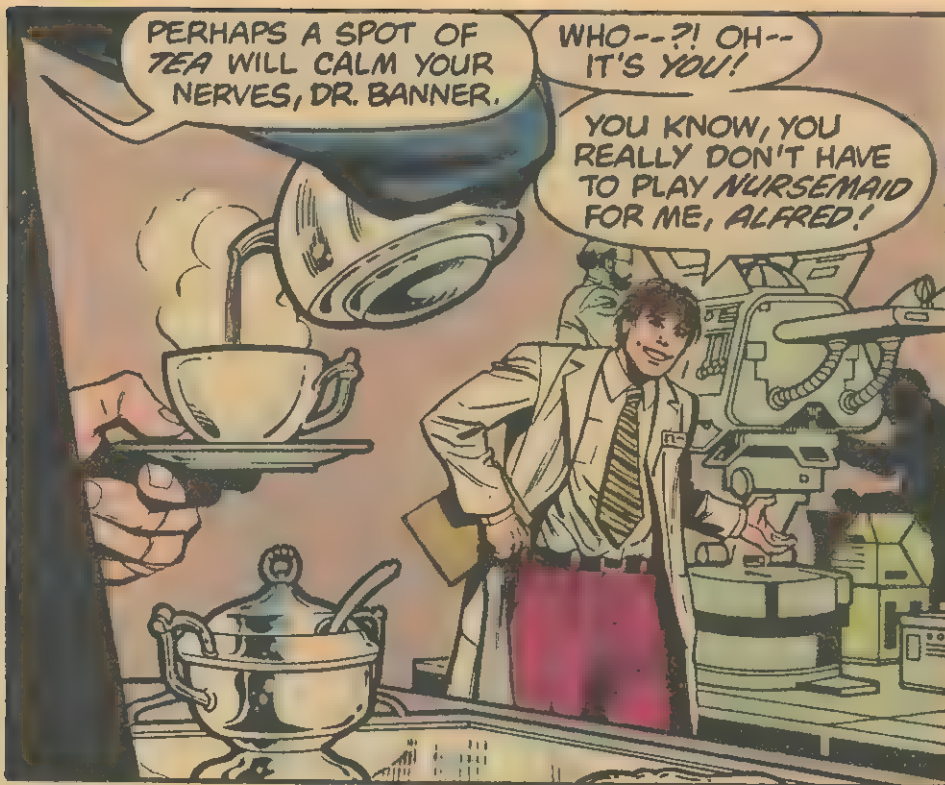
F-FORGIVE ME, JACKSON-- I'M AFRAID THE PRESSURE HAS BEEN GETTING TO ME.

THAT'S OKAY, DOCTOR--WE'RE ALL A LITTLE TENSE.

THE BATTLE BRUCE BANNER WAGES WITH THE BEAST WHO DWELLS WITHIN HIM IS BRUTAL--

AND A LITTLE AFRAID... OF YOU.

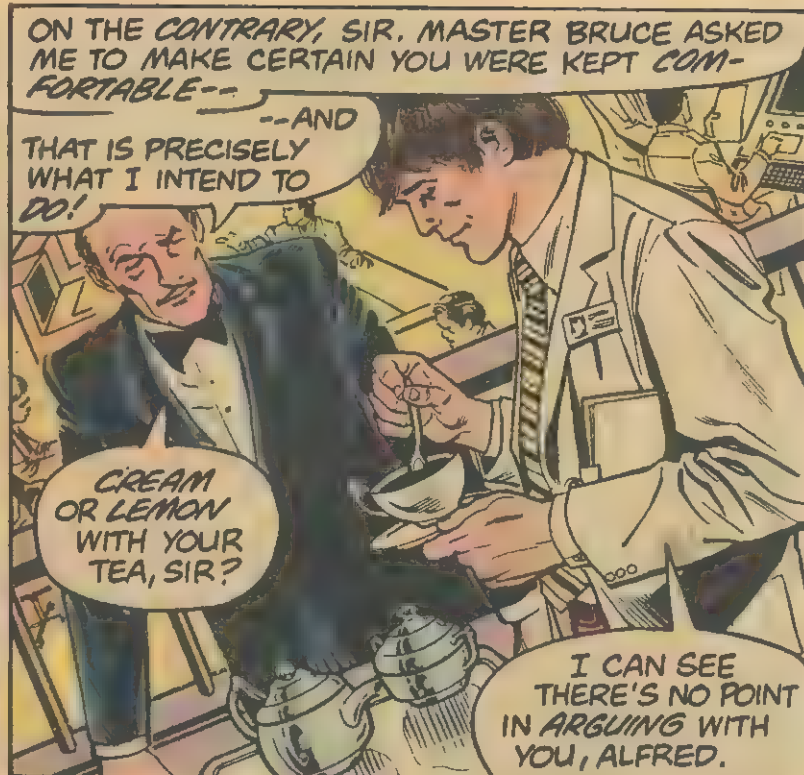




PERHAPS A SPOT OF TEA WILL CALM YOUR NERVES, DR. BANNER.

WHO--?! OH-- IT'S YOU!

YOU KNOW, YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE TO PLAY NURSEMAID FOR ME, ALFRED!



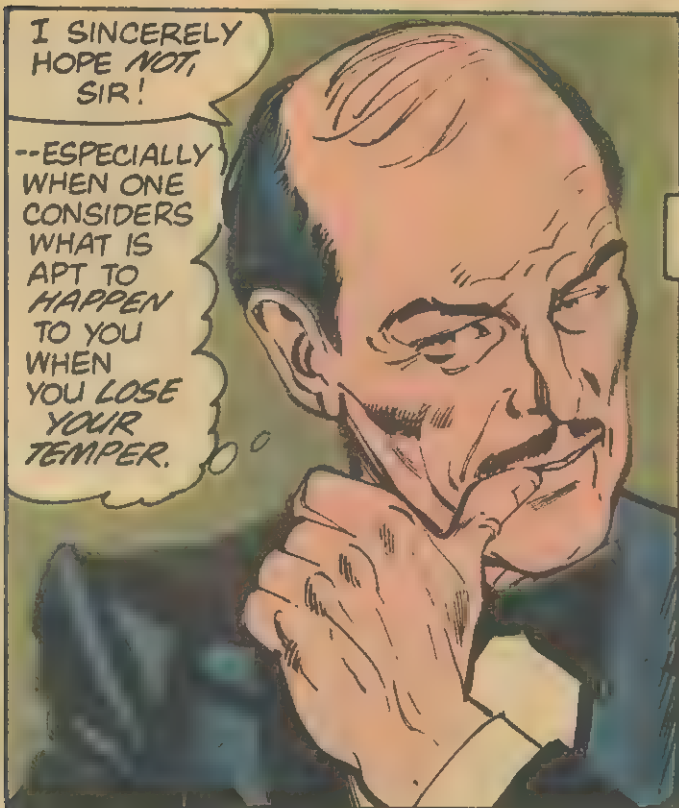
ON THE CONTRARY, SIR. MASTER BRUCE ASKED ME TO MAKE CERTAIN YOU WERE KEPT COM-FORTABLE--

--AND

THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT I INTEND TO DO!

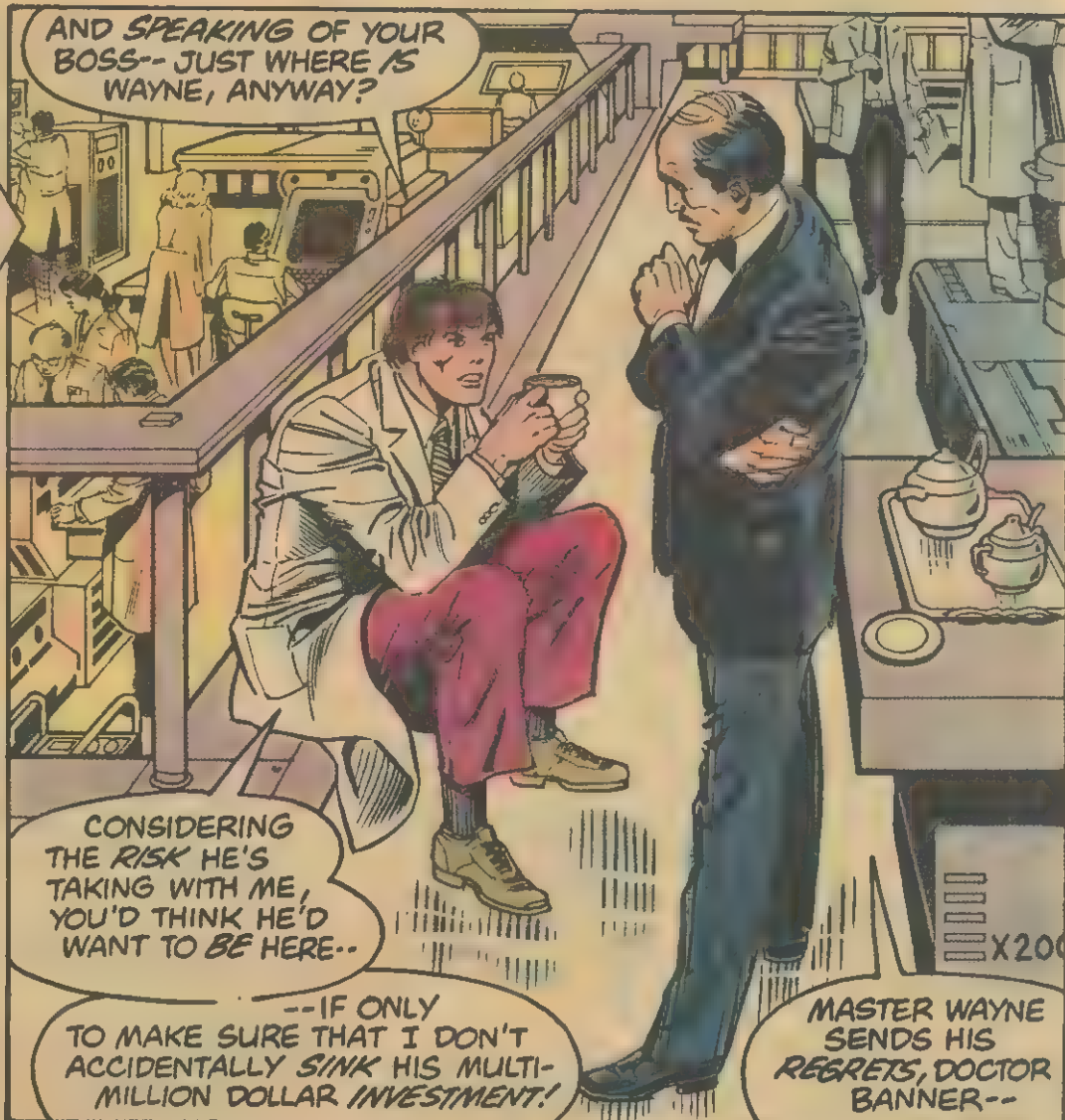
CREAM OR LEMON WITH YOUR TEA, SIR?

I CAN SEE THERE'S NO POINT IN ARGUING WITH YOU, ALFRED.



I SINCERELY HOPE NOT, SIR!

--ESPECIALLY WHEN ONE CONSIDERS WHAT IS APT TO HAPPEN TO YOU WHEN YOU LOSE YOUR TEMPER.

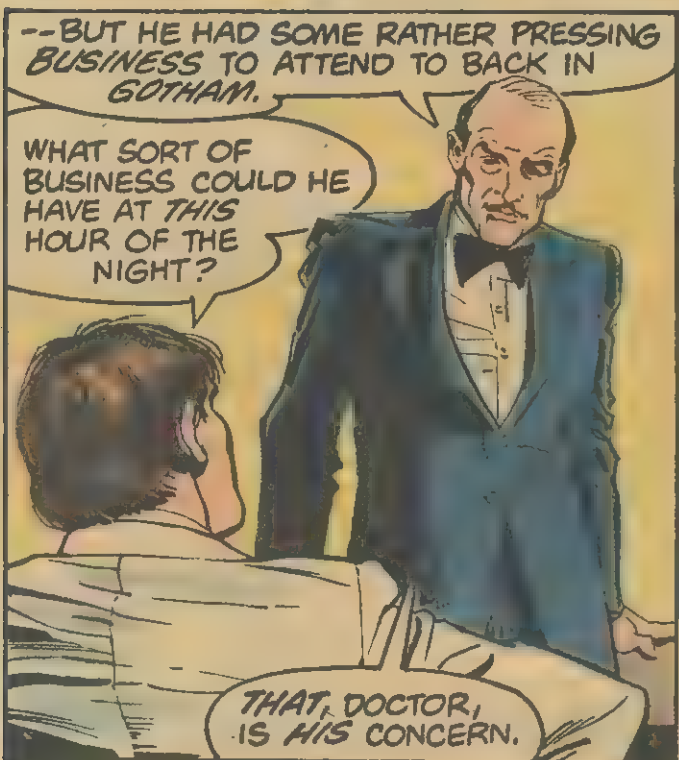


AND SPEAKING OF YOUR BOSS-- JUST WHERE IS WAYNE, ANYWAY?

CONSIDERING THE RISK HE'S TAKING WITH ME, YOU'D THINK HE'D WANT TO BE HERE--

--IF ONLY TO MAKE SURE THAT I DON'T ACCIDENTALLY SINK HIS MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR INVESTMENT!

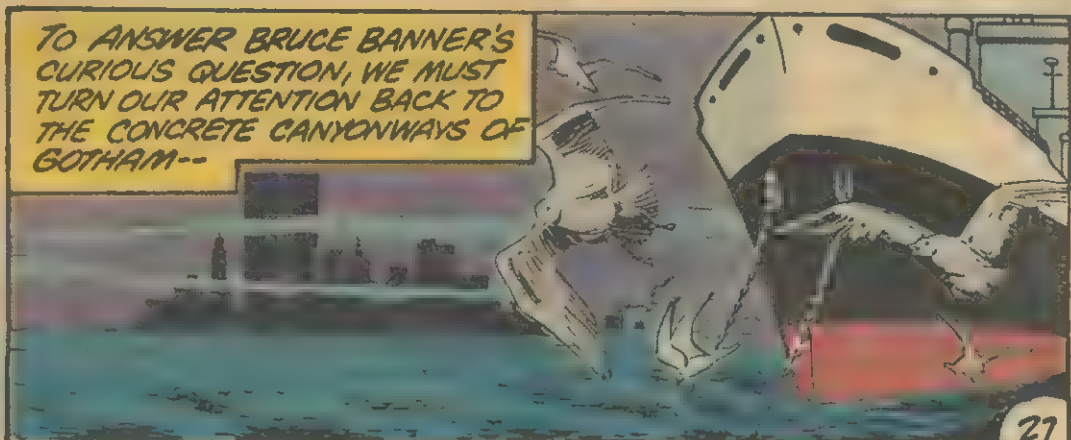
MASTER WAYNE SENDS HIS REGRETS, DOCTOR BANNER--



--BUT HE HAD SOME RATHER PRESSING BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO BACK IN GOTHAM.

WHAT SORT OF BUSINESS COULD HE HAVE AT THIS HOUR OF THE NIGHT?

THAT, DOCTOR, IS HIS CONCERN.



TO ANSWER BRUCE BANNER'S CURIOUS QUESTION, WE MUST TURN OUR ATTENTION BACK TO THE CONCRETE CANYONWAYS OF GOTHAM--



--WHERE BRUCE WAYNE IS "ATTENDING TO BUSINESS" AS ONLY THE BATMAN CAN!

STOGIE, I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!

CRIPES! I TOL' YA WE WOULDN'T GET AWAY WIT' IT!

SHUT UP, SIDNEY!

YOU AIN'T GONNA PIN THAT HARDWARE STORE HEIST ON US, MASKED MAN!

YOU AIN'T GONNA LIVE THAT LONG!

CRASH!

BY NOW, STOGIE-- YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN THAT!

UUNNNHH!!

SIDNEY, YOU'VE JUST RUN OUT OF TIME--

--HARD, SOFT, OR OTHERWISE!

HIT 'IM, FELLAS--  
**HARD!**

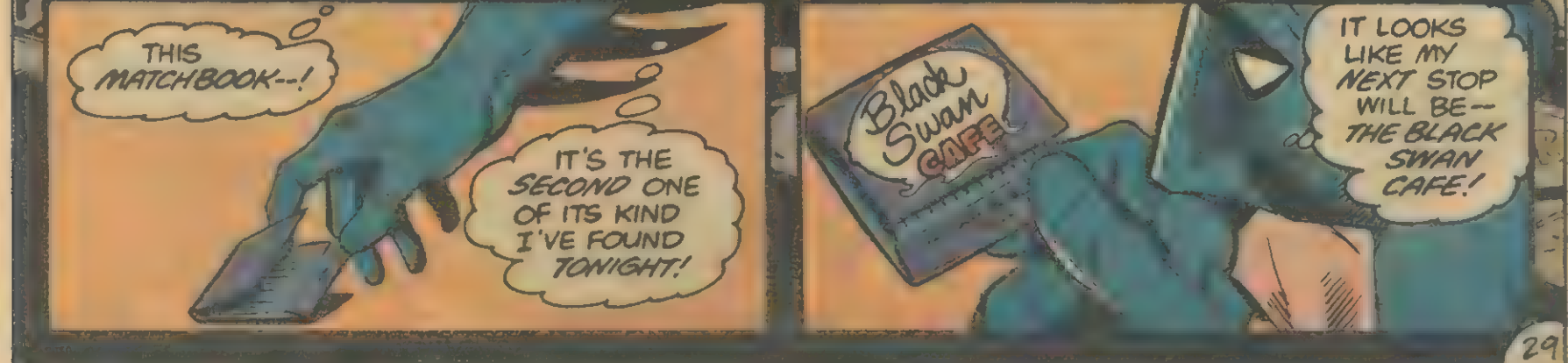
HE PINS THAT HARDWARE JOB ON US--AN' WE ALL DO TWENTY YEARS' HARD TIME!

UURRRK!!

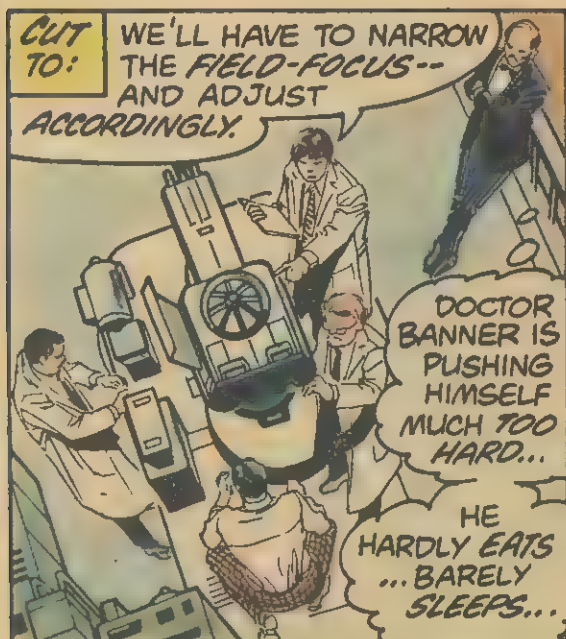
CHOW!

HHUUNNF





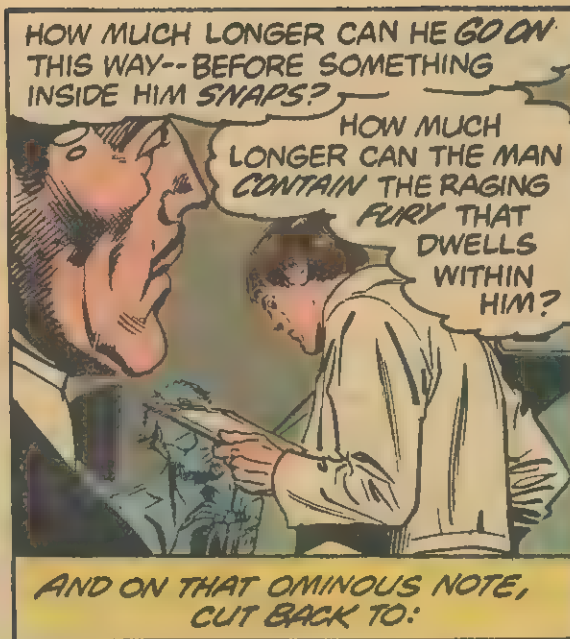




CUT TO: WE'LL HAVE TO NARROW THE FIELD-FOCUS-- AND ADJUST ACCORDINGLY.

DOCTOR BANNER IS PUSHING HIMSELF MUCH TOO HARD...

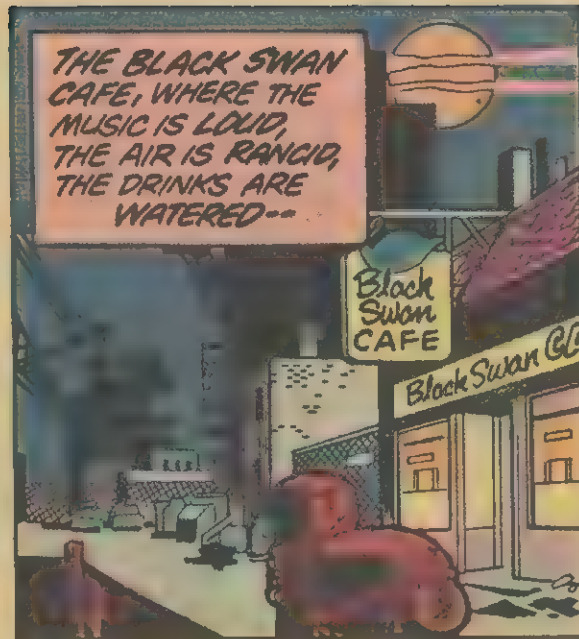
HE HARDLY EATS... BARELY SLEEPS...



HOW MUCH LONGER CAN HE GO ON THIS WAY-- BEFORE SOMETHING INSIDE HIM SNAPS?

HOW MUCH LONGER CAN THE MAN CONTAIN THE RAGING FURY THAT DWELLS WITHIN HIM?

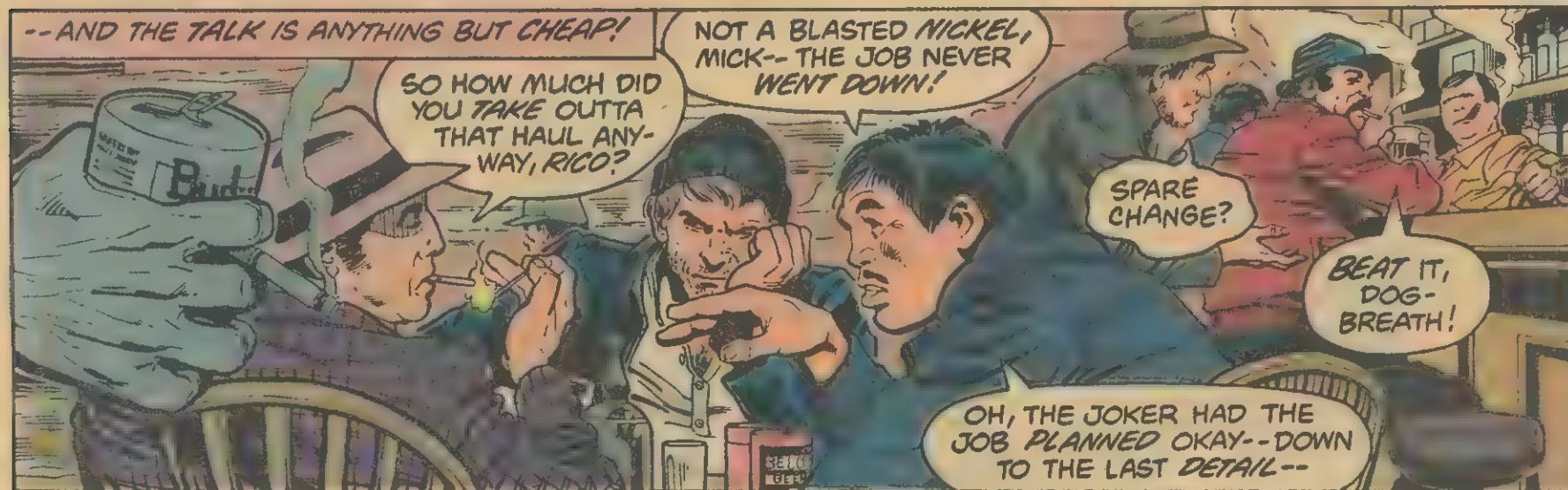
AND ON THAT OMINOUS NOTE, CUT BACK TO:



THE BLACK SWAN CAFE, WHERE THE MUSIC IS LOUD, THE AIR IS RANCID, THE DRINKS ARE WATERED--

Black Swan CAFE

Black Swan CAFE



-- AND THE TALK IS ANYTHING BUT CHEAP!

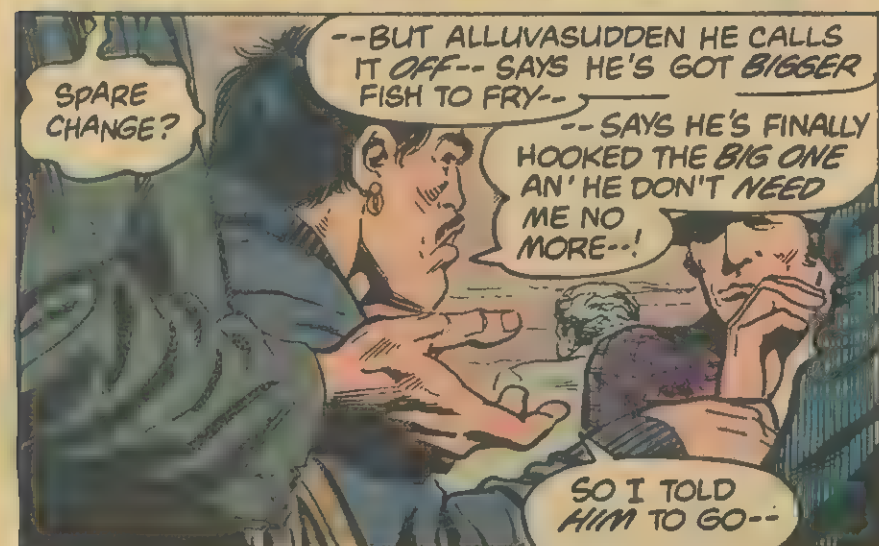
SO HOW MUCH DID YOU TAKE OUTTA THAT HAUL ANYWAY, RICO?

NOT A BLASTED NICKEL, MICK-- THE JOB NEVER WENT DOWN!

SPARE CHANGE?

BEAT IT, DOG-BREATH!

OH, THE JOKER HAD THE JOB PLANNED OKAY-- DOWN TO THE LAST DETAIL--

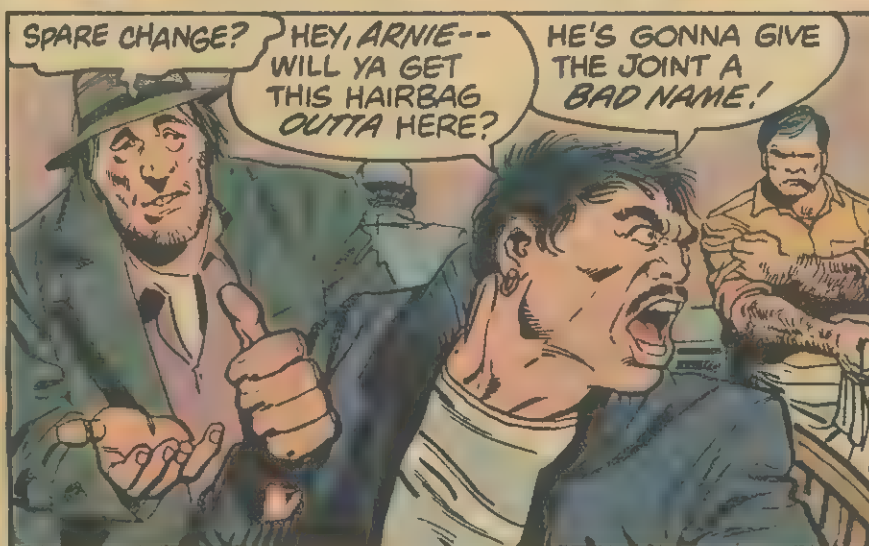


SPARE CHANGE?

-- BUT ALLUVA SUDDEN HE CALLS IT OFF-- SAYS HE'S GOT BIGGER FISH TO FRY--

-- SAYS HE'S FINALLY HOOKED THE BIG ONE AN' HE DON'T NEED ME NO MORE--!

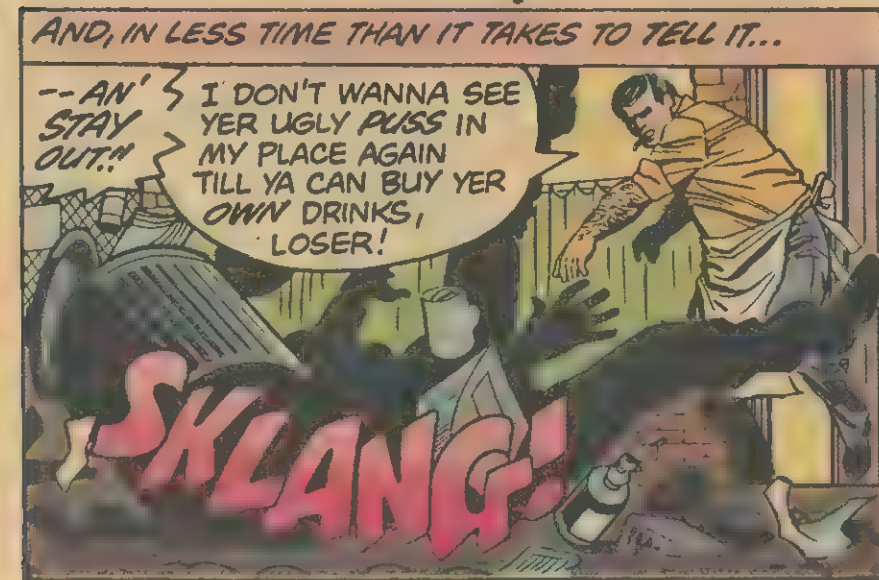
SO I TOLD HIM TO GO--



SPARE CHANGE?

HEY, ARNIE-- WILL YA GET THIS HAIRBAG OUTTA HERE?

HE'S GONNA GIVE THE JOINT A BAD NAME!

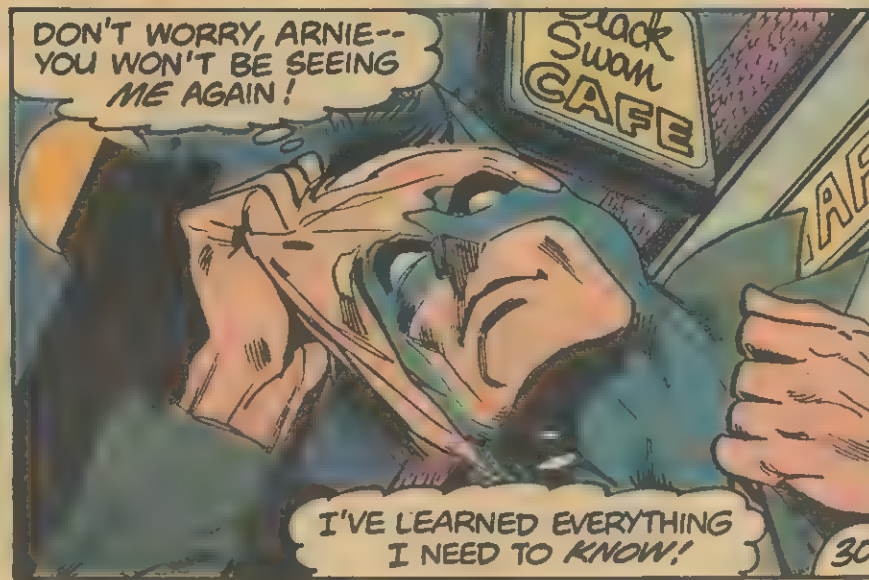


AND, IN LESS TIME THAN IT TAKES TO TELL IT...

-- AN' STAY OUT!!

I DON'T WANNA SEE YER UGLY PUSS IN MY PLACE AGAIN TILL YA CAN BUY YER OWN DRINKS, LOSER!

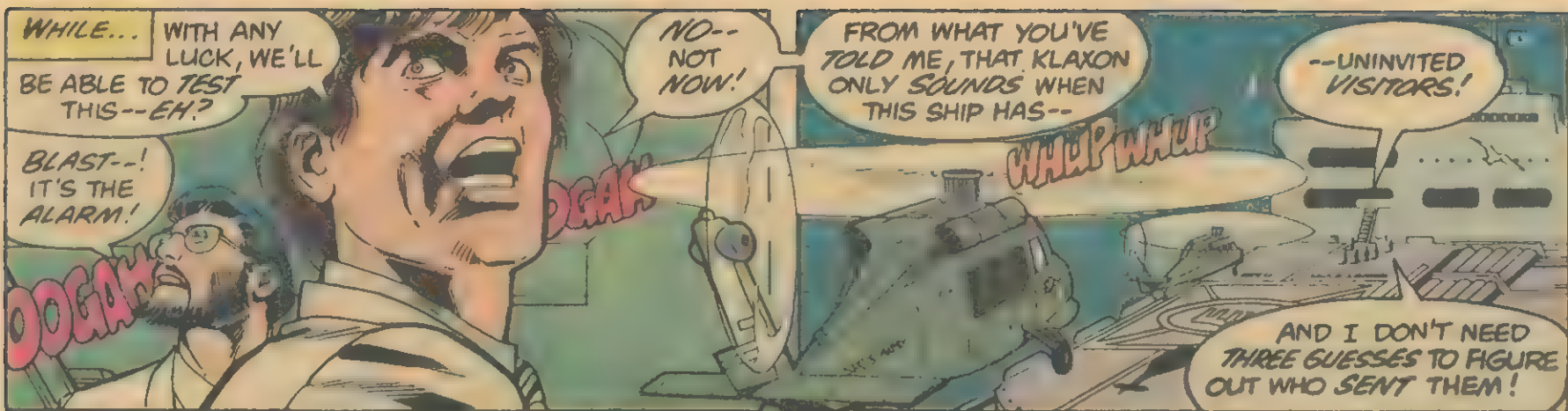
SKLANG!



DON'T WORRY, ARNIE-- YOU WON'T BE SEEING ME AGAIN!

I'VE LEARNED EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW!





WHILE... WITH ANY LUCK, WE'LL BE ABLE TO TEST THIS--EH?

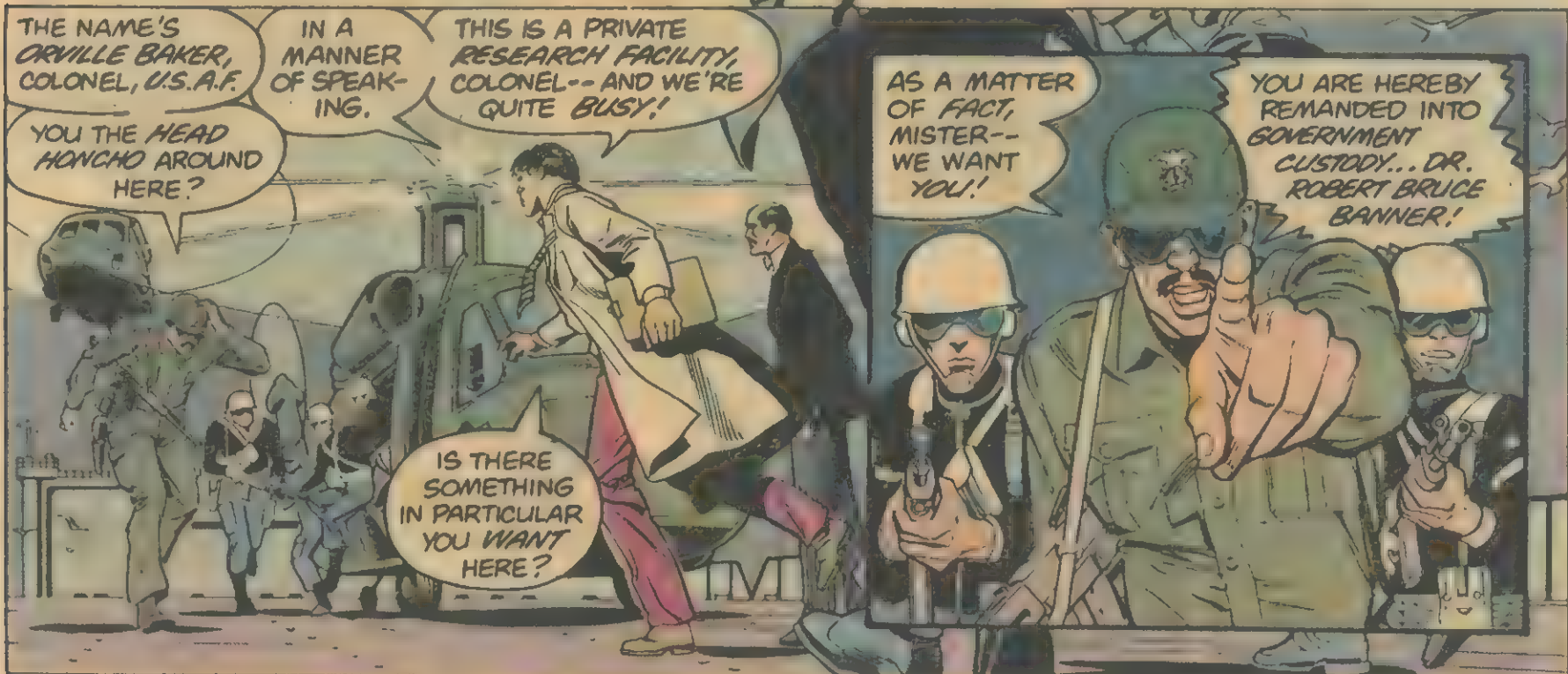
BLAST--! IT'S THE ALARM!

NO-- NOT NOW!

FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME, THAT KLAXON ONLY SOUNDS WHEN THIS SHIP HAS--

--UNINVITED VISITORS!

AND I DON'T NEED THREE GUESSES TO FIGURE OUT WHO SENT THEM!



THE NAME'S ORVILLE BAKER, COLONEL, U.S.A.F.

IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING.

THIS IS A PRIVATE RESEARCH FACILITY, COLONEL-- AND WE'RE QUITE BUSY!

YOU THE HEAD HONCHO AROUND HERE?

IS THERE SOMETHING IN PARTICULAR YOU WANT HERE?

AS A MATTER OF FACT, MISTER-- WE WANT YOU!

YOU ARE HEREBY REMANDED INTO GOVERNMENT CUSTODY... DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER!



GET 'IM OUTTA HERE, BOYS!

I'M AFRAID I REALLY MUST PROTEST, SIR! DOCTOR BANNER IS HERE AS A PERSONAL GUEST OF MR. BRUCE WAYNE!

YOU HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO AUTHORITY TO REMOVE THE DOCTOR FROM THE PREMISES LIKE THIS!

NO, ALFRED--DON'T ARGUE! MAYBE IT'S BETTER THIS WAY!



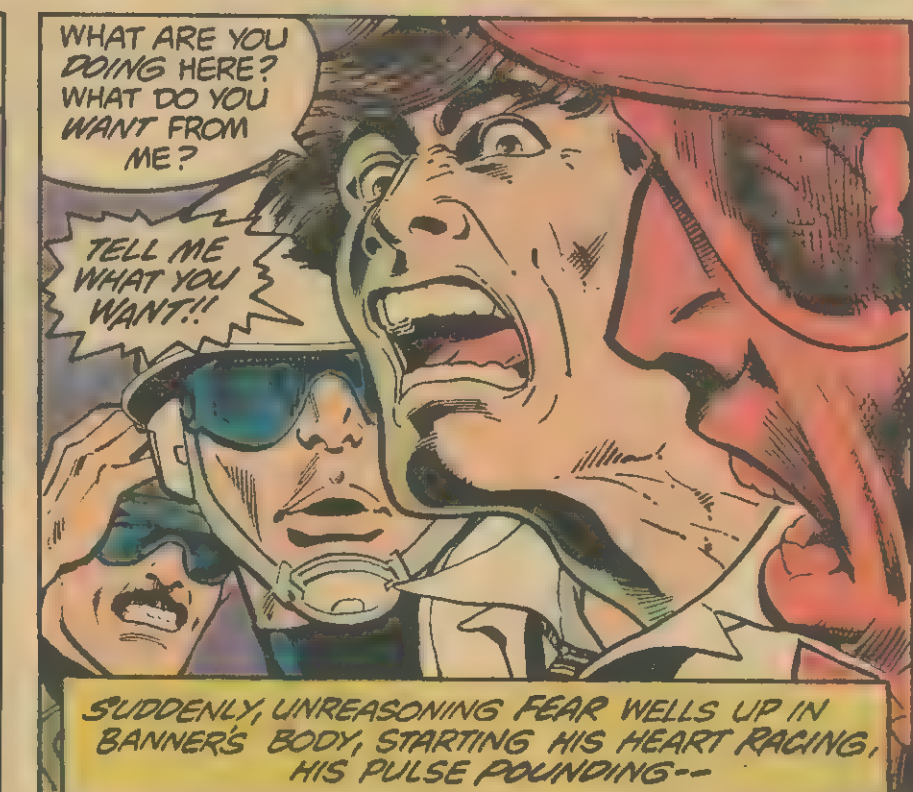
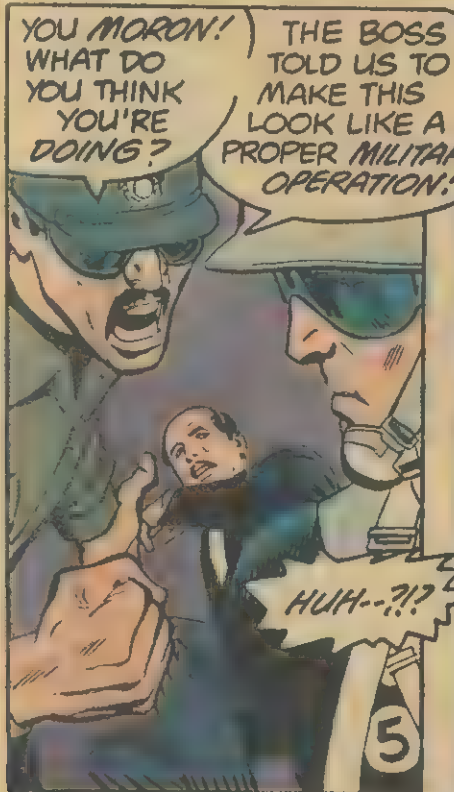
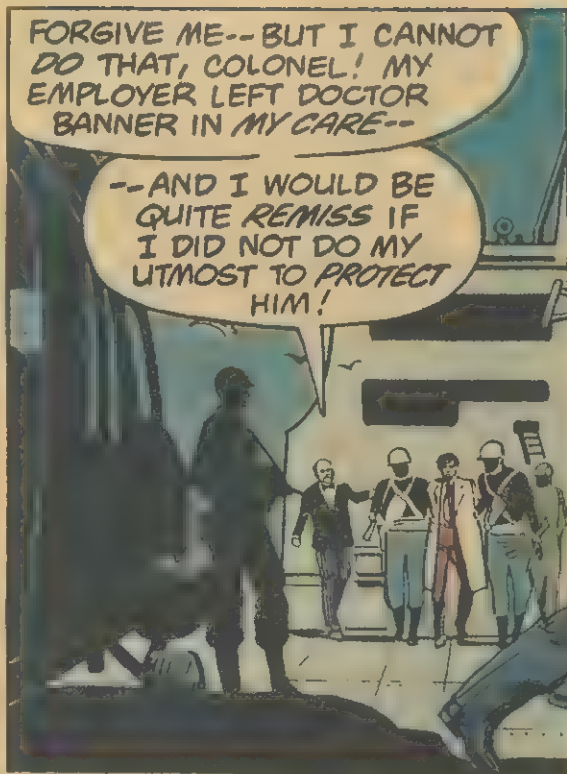
MAYBE I WAS NEVER MEANT TO FIND A CURE FOR MY AFFLICTION!

AT LEAST NOW THEY'LL PUT ME SOME PLACE WHERE I CAN NEVER HURT ANYBODY EVER AGAIN!

YOU HEARD YOUR BUDDY, LITTLE MAN!

NOW LET'S GET MOVING-- WE HAVEN'T GOT ALL DAY!









MAD!? YES, MAD AT PUNY HUMANS WHO ALWAYS TRY TO HURT HULK!  
HULK IS MAD!!

MAD AT WORLD THAT WILL NOT LEAVE HULK ALONE!

AND THUS, THE SEEMINGLY-ETERNAL BATTLE IS JOINED ONCE MORE--

--THOUGH IT IS A DECIDEDLY ONE-SIDED BATTLE AT BEST!

C'MON, YOU GUYS-- WE GOTTA BRING THIS MONSTER DOWN!

BAH! LITTLE MEN ARE LIKE ANTS-- ALWAYS ANNOYING HULK-- MAKING HULK ITCH--!

STOP BOTHERING HULK, LITTLE MEN-- OR HULK WILL SQUASH YOU LIKE THE BUGS YOU ARE!

JUST KEEP HIM BUSY A FEW SECONDS LONGER, BOYS -- I GOT THE TASER-RIFLE!

THE ELECTRICAL CHARGE IN THIS BABY COULD BRING DOWN KING KONG--

--SO IT SHOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE AT ALL WITH A CERTAIN GREEN GORILLA!



SWIFTLY, THE  
REMARKABLE  
WEAPON IS FIRED,  
UNREELING TWO  
SMALL SUCTION-  
CLAWS--

--WHICH AUTOMATICALLY  
ADHERE TO THE EMERALD  
MAN-BRUTE'S MASSIVE  
CHEST--

HUHN?

--AND INSTANTLY  
UNLEASH 25,000  
SIZZLING VOLTS OF  
PURE ELECTRICITY--

--MORE THAN ENOUGH POWER TO  
STUN ANY NORMAL CREATURE  
INTO HELPLESS SUBMISSION--

--BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, AS HAS BEEN  
PREVIOUSLY STATED, THE INCREDIBLE  
HULK IS ANYTHING BUT NORMAL!

WHY, LITTLE MEN? WHY DO YOU  
ALWAYS TRY TO DESTROY HULK  
WITH YOUR PUNY GUNS AND  
MACHINES?

HULK NEVER  
WANTS TO FIGHT  
YOU! HULK ONLY  
WANTS TO BE  
LEFT IN PEACE!

BUT IF IT IS  
WAR THAT LITTLE  
MEN WANT--

--THEN WAR IS WHAT HULK  
WILL GIVE YOU!

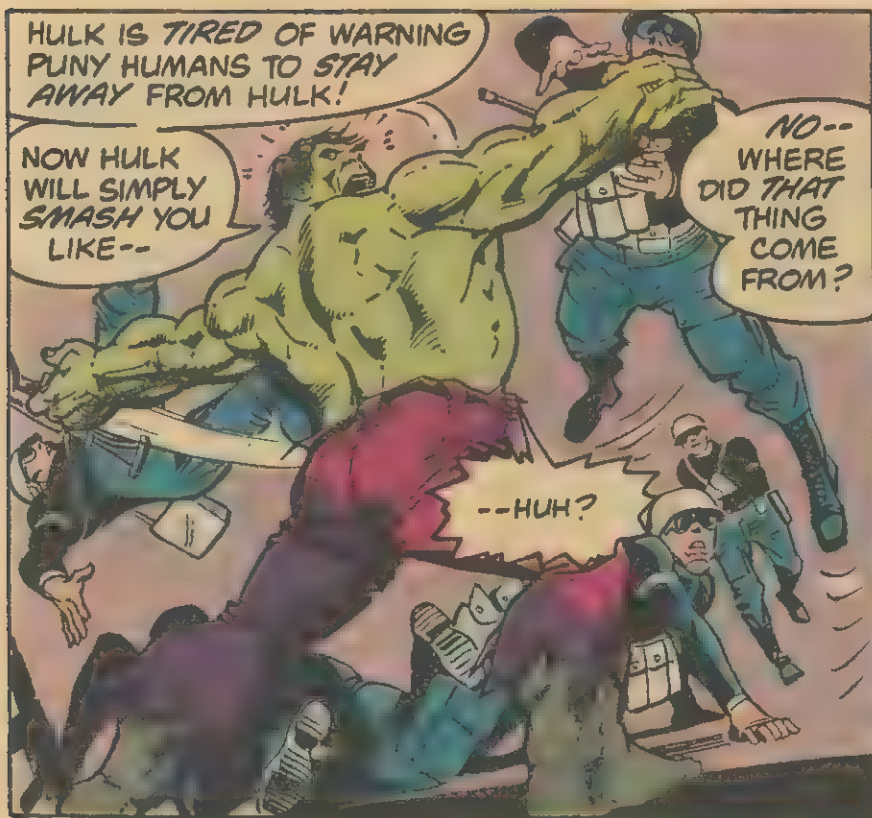
H-HE THREW ME  
ACROSS THE DECK  
LIKE--LIKE I  
WAS JUST SOME  
KIND OF PAPER  
DOLL--!

LORD, IF THE TASER-  
GUN COULDN'T BEAT  
THAT MONSTER--WHAT  
WILL?

IT WOULD TAKE  
A BIGGER  
MONSTER, THAT'S  
WHAT-- SOMETHING  
TOUGHER, MORE  
POWERFUL--  
SOMETHING THOSE  
OVERSIZED FISTS  
COULDN'T SMASH!

YEAH, RIGHT--AND WHILE I'M  
AT IT, WHY DON'T I TRY WHIST-  
LING UP THE TOOTH FAIRY?





HULK IS TIRED OF WARNING PUNY HUMANS TO STAY AWAY FROM HULK!

NOW HULK WILL SIMPLY SMASH YOU LIKE--

NO-- WHERE DID THAT THING COME FROM?

--HUH?

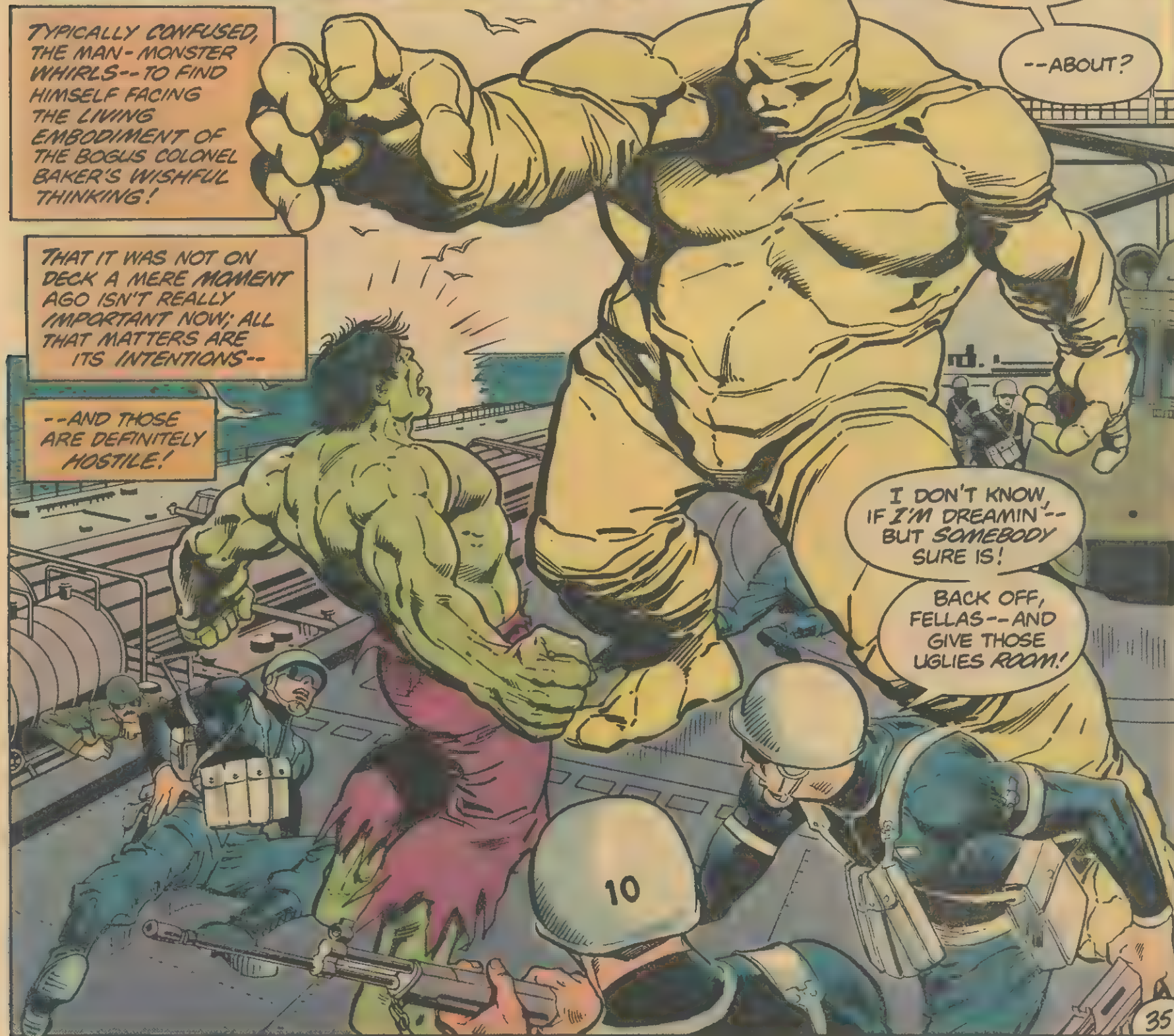


THAT CUTS IT-- I QUIT! FIGHTING THE HULK IS BAD ENOUGH--

--BUT THE BOSS NEVER TOLD US WE'D HAVE TO TAKE ON TWO MONSTERS!

TWO--?!?

WHAT IS PUNY HUMAN JABBERING--



TYPICALLY CONFUSED, THE MAN-MONSTER WHIRLS-- TO FIND HIMSELF FACING THE LIVING EMBODIMENT OF THE BOGUS COLONEL BAKER'S WISHFUL THINKING!

THAT IT WAS NOT ON DECK A MERE MOMENT AGO ISN'T REALLY IMPORTANT NOW; ALL THAT MATTERS ARE ITS INTENTIONS--

--AND THOSE ARE DEFINITELY HOSTILE!

--ABOUT?

I DON'T KNOW, IF I'M DREAMIN'-- BUT SOMEBODY SURE IS!

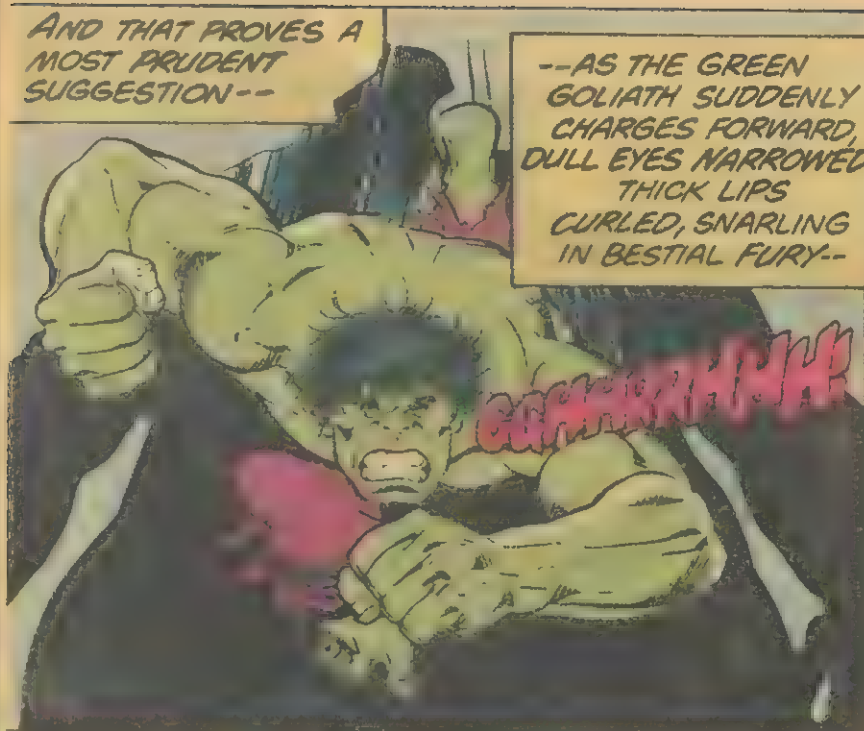
BACK OFF, FELLAS-- AND GIVE THOSE UGLIES ROOM!

10

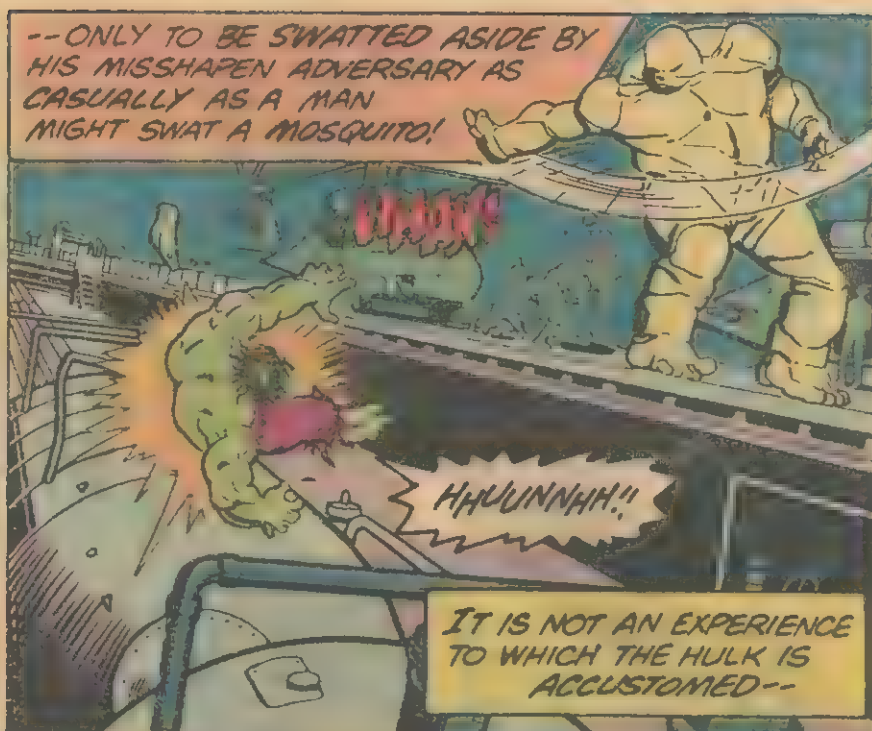


AND THAT PROVES A MOST PRUDENT SUGGESTION--

--AS THE GREEN GOLIATH SUDDENLY CHARGES FORWARD, DULL EYES NARROWED, THICK LIPS CURLED, SNARLING IN BESTIAL FURY--



--ONLY TO BE SWATTED ASIDE BY HIS MISSHAPEN ADVERSARY AS CASUALLY AS A MAN MIGHT SWAT A MOSQUITO!



IT IS NOT AN EXPERIENCE TO WHICH THE HULK IS ACCUSTOMED--

--AND HE IS QUICK TO MAKE HIS DISPLEASURE KNOWN!

YOU HIT HULK--  
TRIED TO HURT  
HULK--

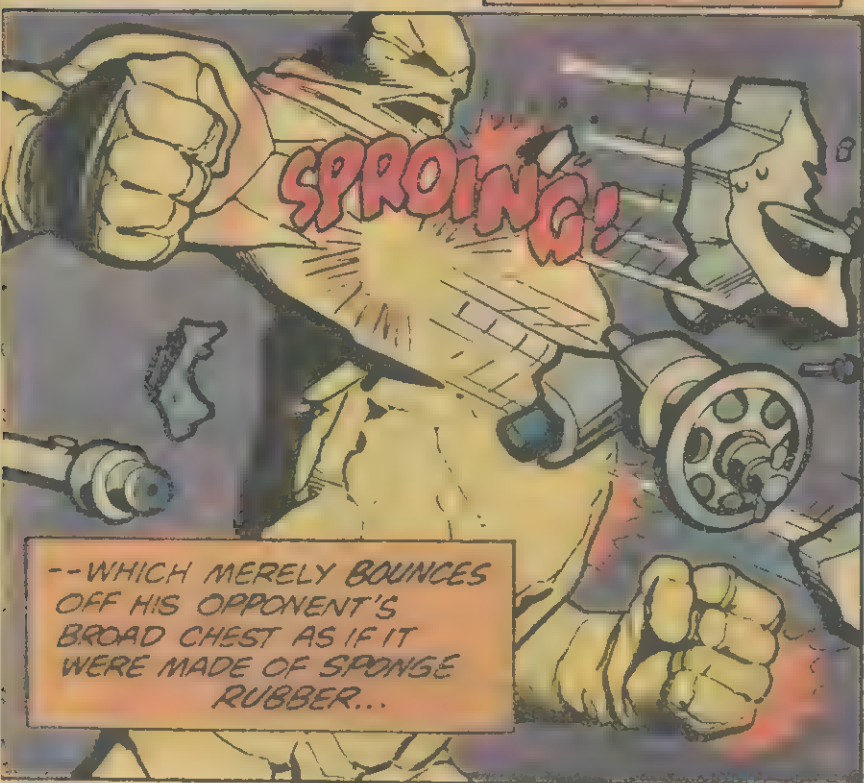
--AND FOR  
THAT... YOU  
WILL PAY!!



TATTERING THE REINFORCED DECK LIKE SO MUCH CONFETTI, THE MADDENED MAN-BRUTE UNLEASHES A FUSILLADE OF JAGGED STEEL--

SPROING!

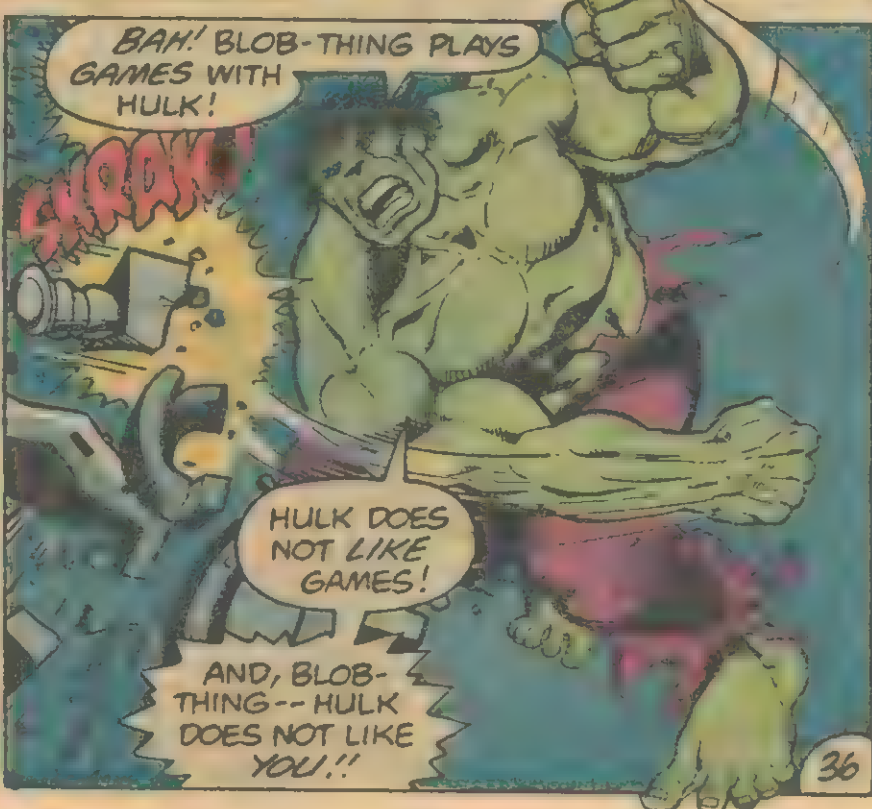
--WHICH MERELY BOUNCES OFF HIS OPPONENT'S BROAD CHEST AS IF IT WERE MADE OF SPONGE RUBBER...



BAH! BLOB-THING PLAYS GAMES WITH HULK!

HULK DOES NOT LIKE GAMES!

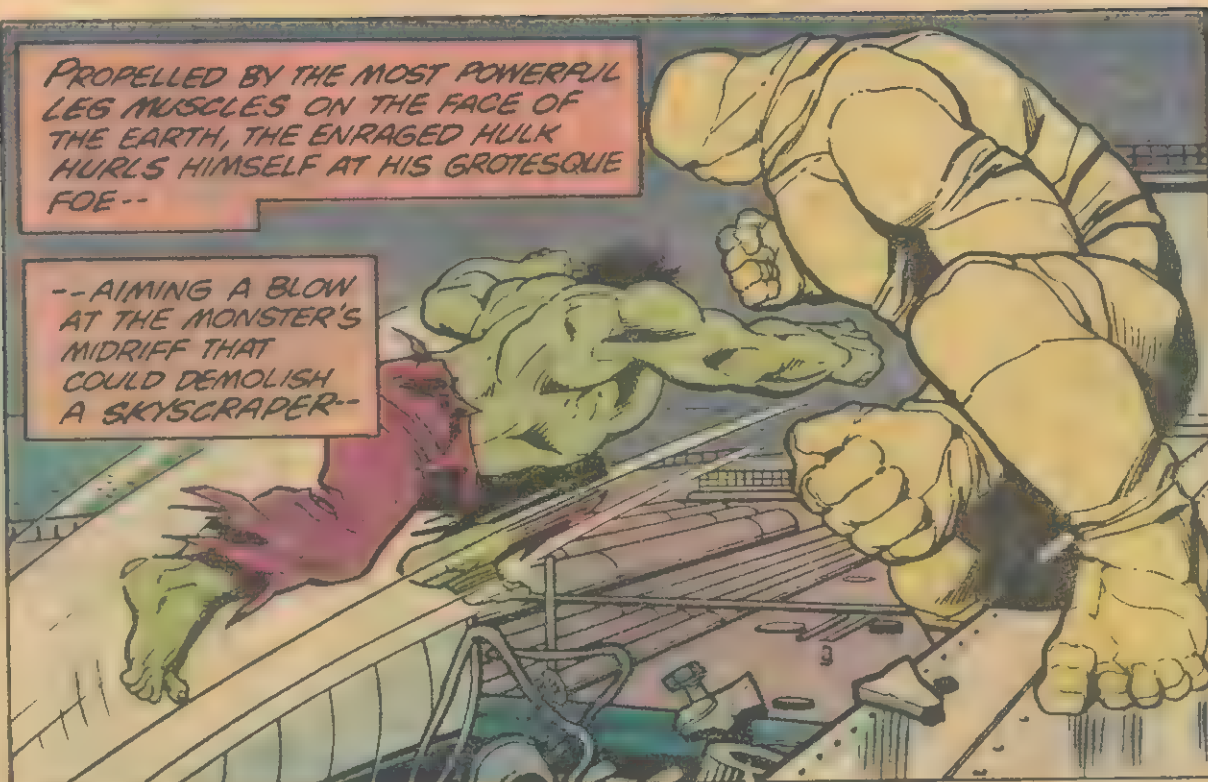
AND, BLOB-THING-- HULK DOES NOT LIKE YOU!!





PROPELLED BY THE MOST POWERFUL  
LEG MUSCLES ON THE FACE OF  
THE EARTH, THE ENRAGED HULK  
HURLS HIMSELF AT HIS GROTESQUE  
FOE--

--AIMING A BLOW  
AT THE MONSTER'S  
MIDRIFF THAT  
COULD DEMOLISH  
A SKYSCRAPER--



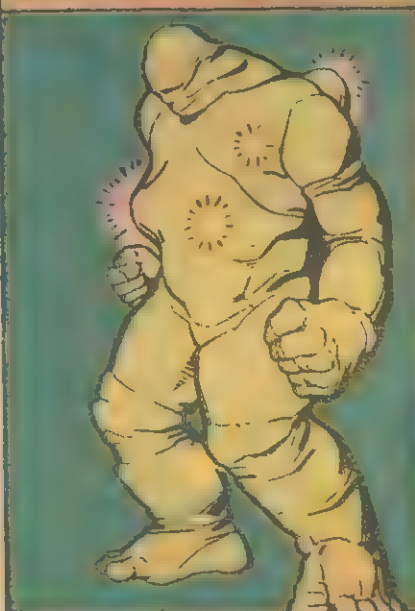
--BUT INSTEAD, MERELY  
SINKS INTO THE DOUGH-LIKE  
SUBSTANCE OF THE CREATURE--



--CARRYING THE UN-  
COMPREHENDING HULK  
RIGHT ALONG WITH IT!



FOR SEVERAL MINUTES,  
THE DOUGH-CREATURE'S  
DISTORTED TORSO  
CONVULSES AS THE HULK  
STRUGGLES TO FREE HIMSELF--



--UNTIL, AT LAST, THE  
STRUGGLING STOPS--



--AND THE DOUGH-  
BEAST SHAMBLES SILENTLY  
ACROSS THE DECK WITH  
HIS LESS-THAN-SILENT  
CAPTIVE!



LET HULK OUT,  
BLOB-THING!

LET  
HULK  
GO!!

YOU AIN'T GOIN'  
NOWHERE,  
GREENIE--

--EXCEPT  
WHERE WE  
WANT YOU  
TO GO!

ENOUGH TALKING! LET'S  
GET OUR-- AH-- SECRET  
WEAPON HERE ON BOARD--

--AND LET'S  
FINALLY GET OUT  
OF HERE!

YOU WILL PAY  
FOR THIS,  
LITTLE MEN!

OH, HOW YOU  
WILL PAY!!

AND SECONDS  
LATER, THE TWO  
CARGO-COPTERS  
LIFT HIGH AND  
AWAY FROM THE  
SUPER-TANKER--

--LEAVING A FRU-  
STRATED ALFRED  
STANDING HELPLESSLY  
ON DECK, ALONE  
AND NOT A LITTLE  
AFRAID...



SOON AFTER...

--AND I FEAR THAT'S ALL I CAN TELL YOU, COMMISSIONER GORDON.

I WISH IT WERE MORE, ALFRED.

I'VE GOT A LOT OF LOOSE ENDS HANGING HERE--

--AND I'M NOT EXACTLY CRAZY ABOUT MY OLD FRIEND BRUCE WAYNE, HARBORING A WANTED FUGITIVE RIGHT UNDER MY VERY NOSE--!

I'M SURE WAYNE HAD HIS REASONS, COMMISSIONER.

WHO--?!?

OH--IT'S YOU. I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.

I TRY TO BE WHERE I'M NEEDED, OLD FRIEND.

BUT I'M NOT SURE YOU'RE NEEDED HERE, BATMAN.

WE'RE HANDLING THINGS.

STILL, I HAVE COMPLETE FILES ON BANNER AND THE HULK BACK IN THE BAT-CAVE! PERHAPS I CAN--

GENERAL ROSS? GOTHAM POLICE COMMISSIONER JAMES W. GORDON CALLING.

WE'VE GOT A LITTLE PROBLEM HERE...

COMMISSIONER?

YES?

WE'VE FINALLY MANAGED TO PATCH THROUGH YOUR CALL TO NEW MEXICO, SIR.

WRONG, GORDON-- YOU'VE GOT A BIG PROBLEM!

TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THERE HAS BEEN NO MILITARY OPERATION MOUNTED IN THE PAST 24 HOURS TO APPREHEND BRUCE BANNER--

--AND, MISTER, I KNOW EVERYTHING!

HEY, IF THEY NEED A LITTLE EXTRA MUSCLE BACK THERE IN GOTHAM, TELL THEM DOC SAMSON WILL BE HAPPY TO LEND A HAND!

AND, AFTER A FINAL EXCHANGE OF AMENITIES...

LOOKS LIKE YOU WERE RIGHT, ALFRED--

THOSE SO-CALLED SOLDIERS WHO NABBED BANNER WERE PHONIES!

AND IT DOESN'T TAKE A BATMAN TO GUESS WHO THEY WERE WORKING FOR!



# WHEN THE SHAPER COMMANDS...

WHILE, BACK AT A CERTAIN WAREHOUSE...

I SEE YOU--AH--DREAMED UP A WAY OF CONTAINING OUR BIG GREEN GUEST WHILE YOU BROUGHT HIM HERE, ORVILLE.

YEAH, BOSS -- THOUGH I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW THE SHAPER BROUGHT THAT DREAM TO LIFE!

WITH THE FINAL VESTIGES OF A RAPIDLY-FADING POWER, HUMAN--AT THE JOKER'S LIRGINS!

BUT WHY BRING THE HAPLESS HULK HERE, JOKER? HIS MICROCEPHALIC MIND IS INCAPABLE OF ADJUSTING THE GAMMA-GUN SO IT CAN CURE ME!

RIGHT YOU ARE, SHAPER OL' SPORT! GREENIE HERE COULDN'T OUTTHINK AN OVERRIPE CAULIFLOWER!

BUT HIS ALTER-EGO, DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER-- AH, NOW THAT'S A VEGETABLE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR!

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS CHANGE THE HULK BACK INTO BANNER AND--

NO! NOT BANNER! HULK HATES BANNER MOST OF ALL!

BANNER MAKES HULK GO AWAY! BANNER DRAGS HULK DOWN INTO DARKNESS!

BANNER TRIES TO DESTROY HULK--





--BUT HULK WILL DESTROY BANNER FIRST!!

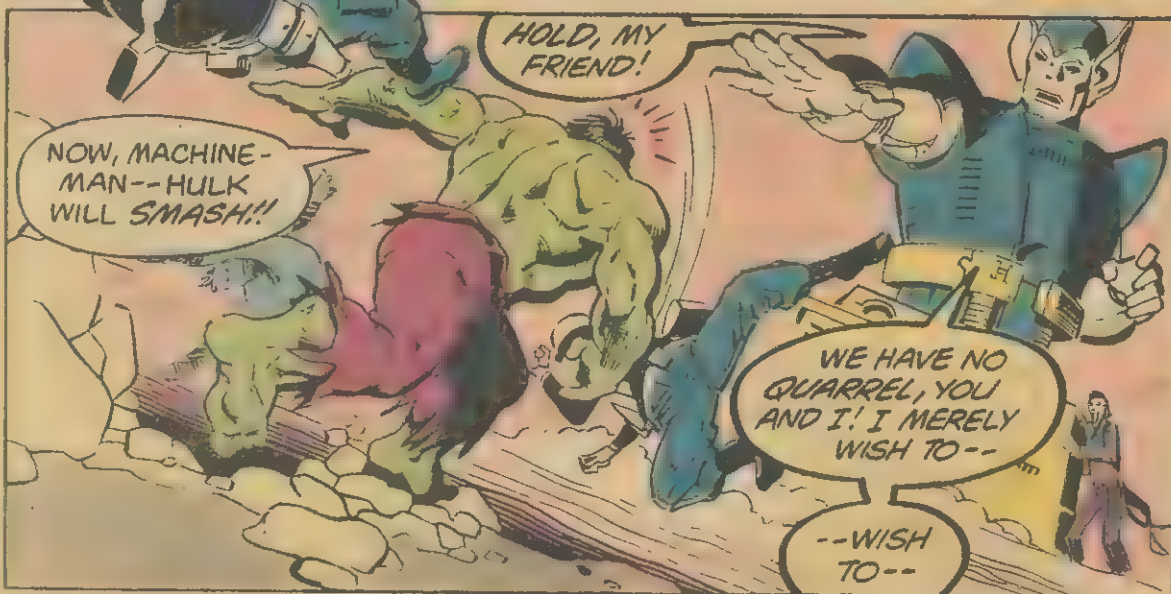
HULK WILL DESTROY YOU ALL!!



CAN'T ANYTHING HOLD THAT GREEN GORILLA?

GET HIM, SHAPER-- BEFORE HE GETS ME!

GET HIM I SHALL, JOKER-- BUT FOR MY SAKE, NOT YOURS!

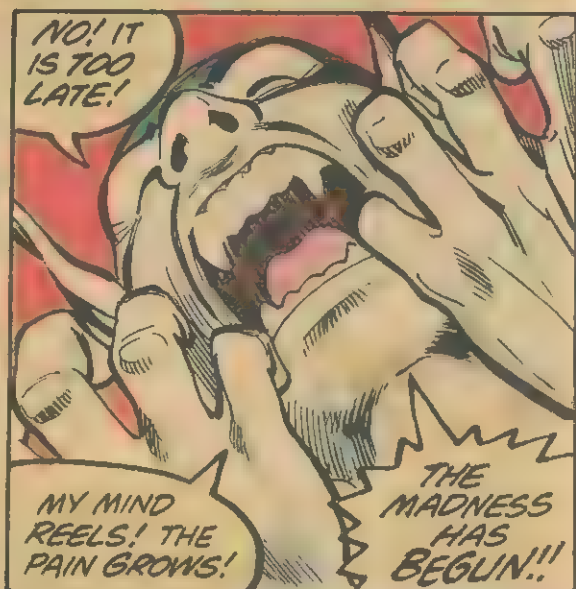


HOLD, MY FRIEND!

NOW, MACHINE-MAN--HULK WILL SMASH!!

WE HAVE NO QUARREL, YOU AND I! I MERELY WISH TO--

--WISH TO--

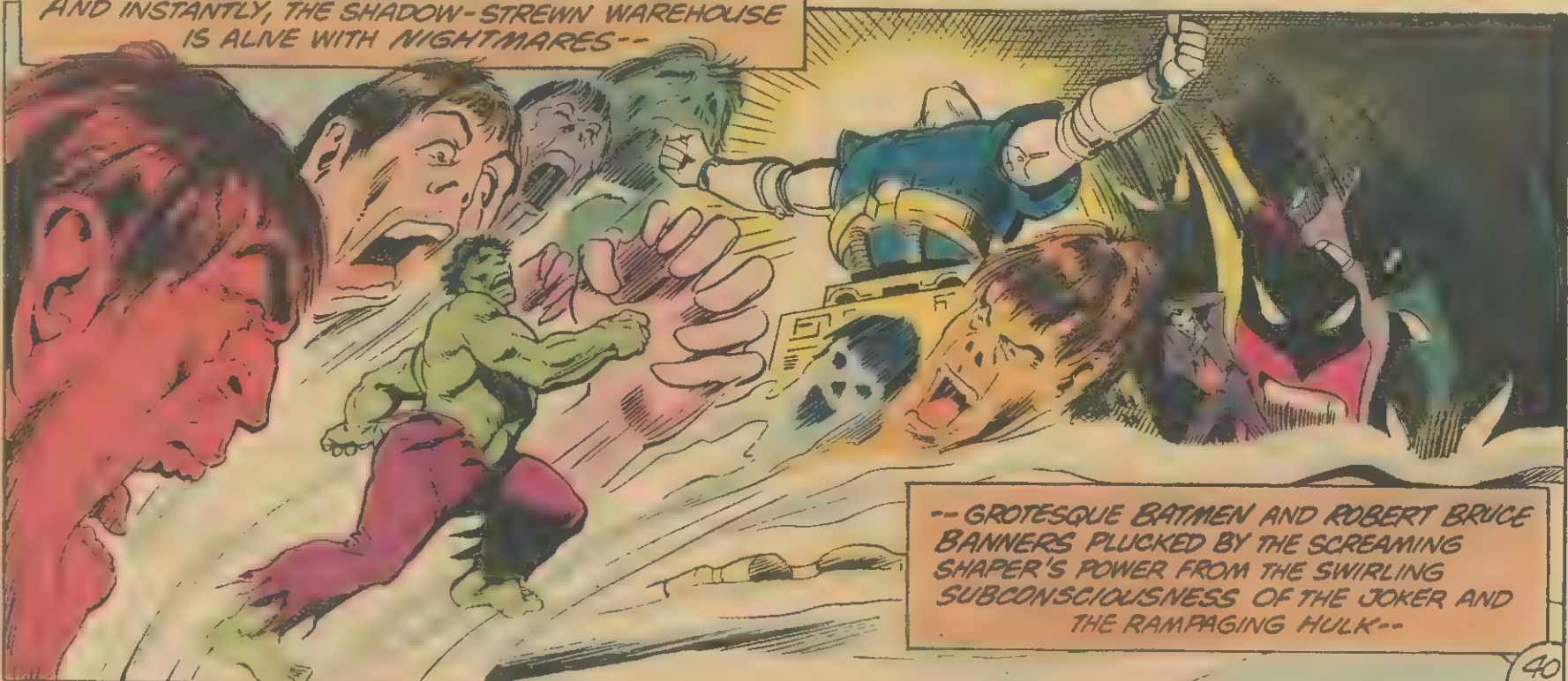


NO! IT IS TOO LATE!

MY MIND REELS! THE PAIN GROWS!

THE MADNESS HAS BEGUN!!

AND INSTANTLY, THE SHADOW-STREWN WAREHOUSE IS ALIVE WITH NIGHTMARES--



-- GROTESQUE BATMEN AND ROBERT BRUCE BANNERS PLUCKED BY THE SCREAMING SHAPER'S POWER FROM THE SWIRLING SUBCONSCIOUSNESS OF THE JOKER AND THE RAMPAGING HULK--

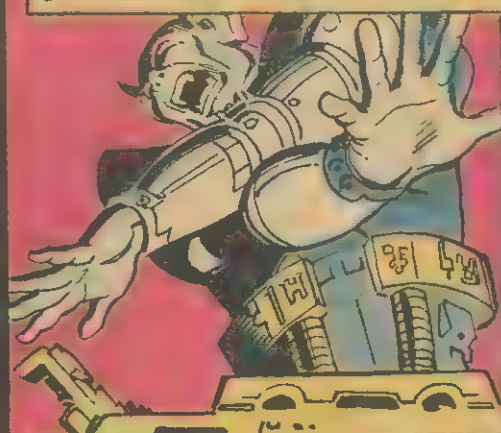


--BUT WHILE THE JOKER STANDS TRANS-  
FIXED WITH FEAR AT THE OVERWHELMING  
SIGHT OF HIS GREATEST  
ENEMY TRANSMOGRIFIED--



--THE BLUDGEONING MAN-BRUTE  
DEALS WITH HIS HATED FOE IN  
TYPICALLY STRAIGHTFORWARD  
FASHION...

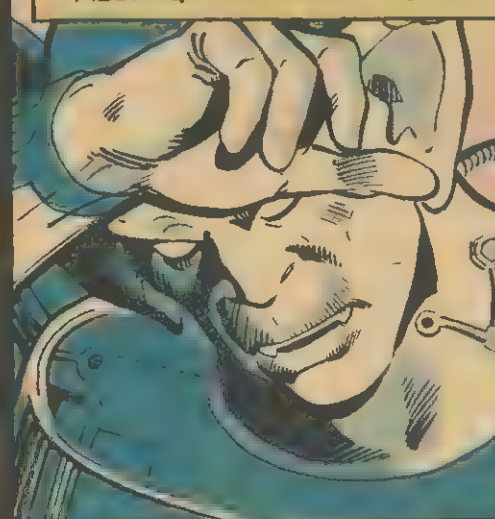
THEN, FAIRLY GLOWING WITH FURY, THE HULK ADVANCES  
ON THE PAIN-MADDENED SHAPER--



--A REMARKABLE REACTION OCCURRING WITH EVERY  
STEP THE GREEN GOLIATH TAKES--

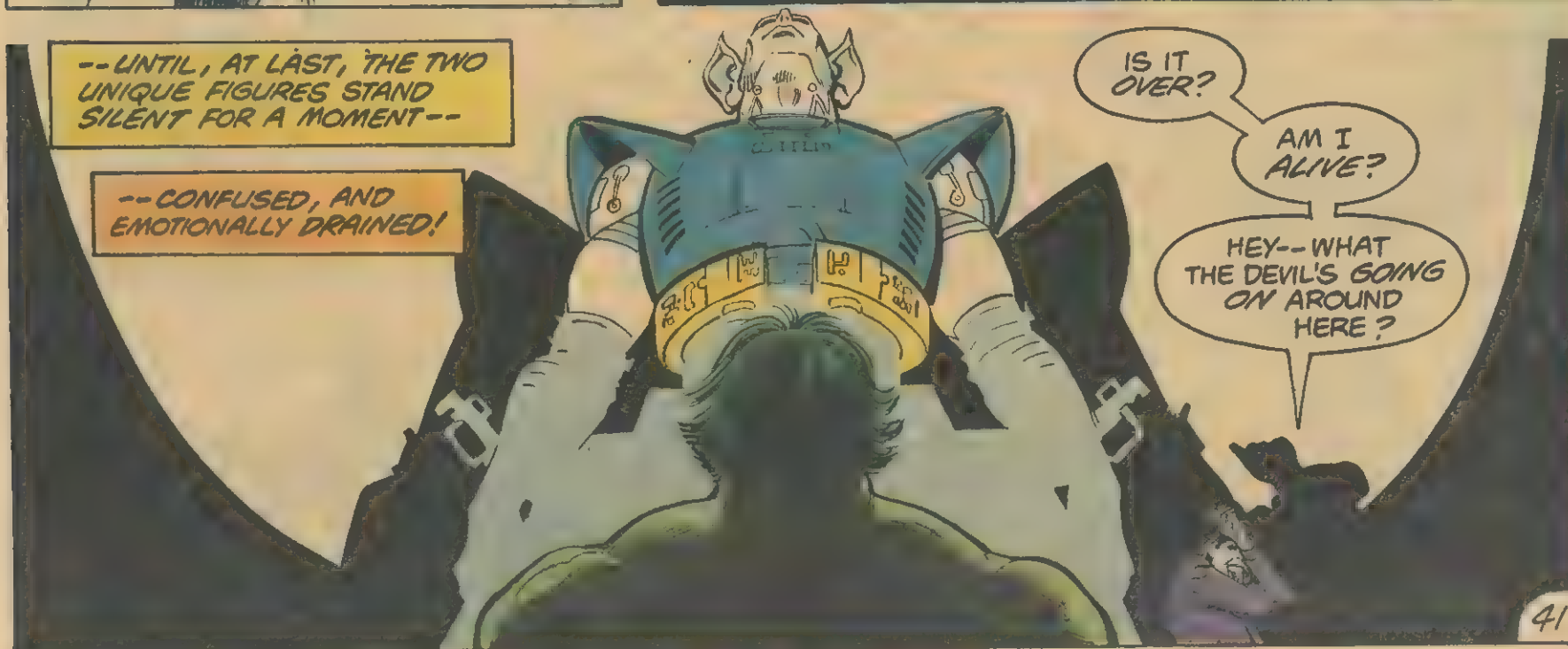


--THE FURY FADING FROM HIS BODY EVEN AS THE PAIN  
RELINQUISHES ITS GRIP ON THE SHAPER--



--UNTIL, AT LAST, THE TWO  
UNIQUE FIGURES STAND  
SILENT FOR A MOMENT--

--CONFUSED, AND  
EMOTIONALLY DRAINED!

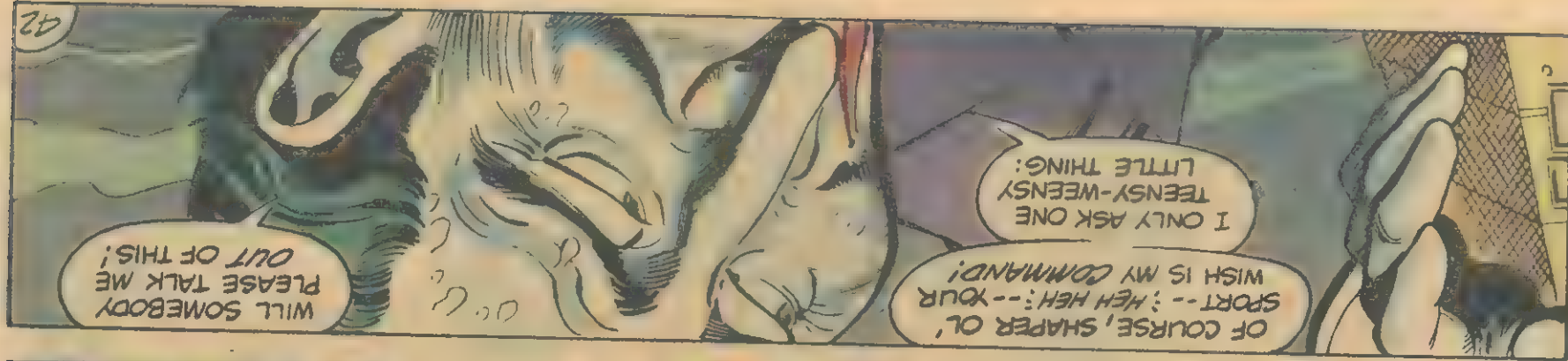


IS IT  
OVER?

AM I  
ALIVE?

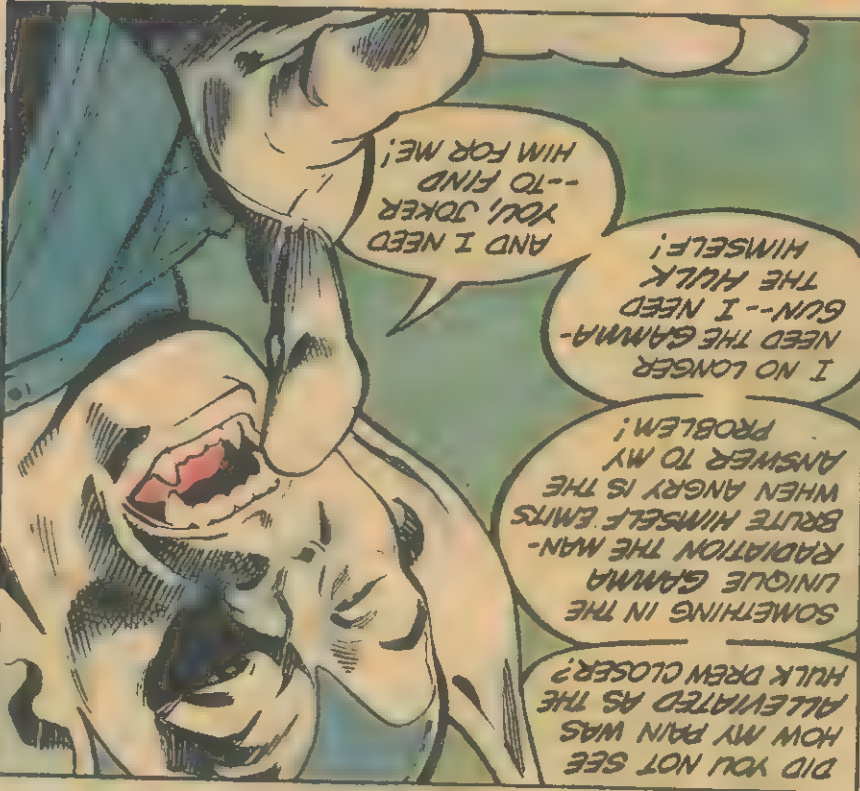
HEY--WHAT  
THE DEVIL'S GOING  
ON AROUND  
HERE?





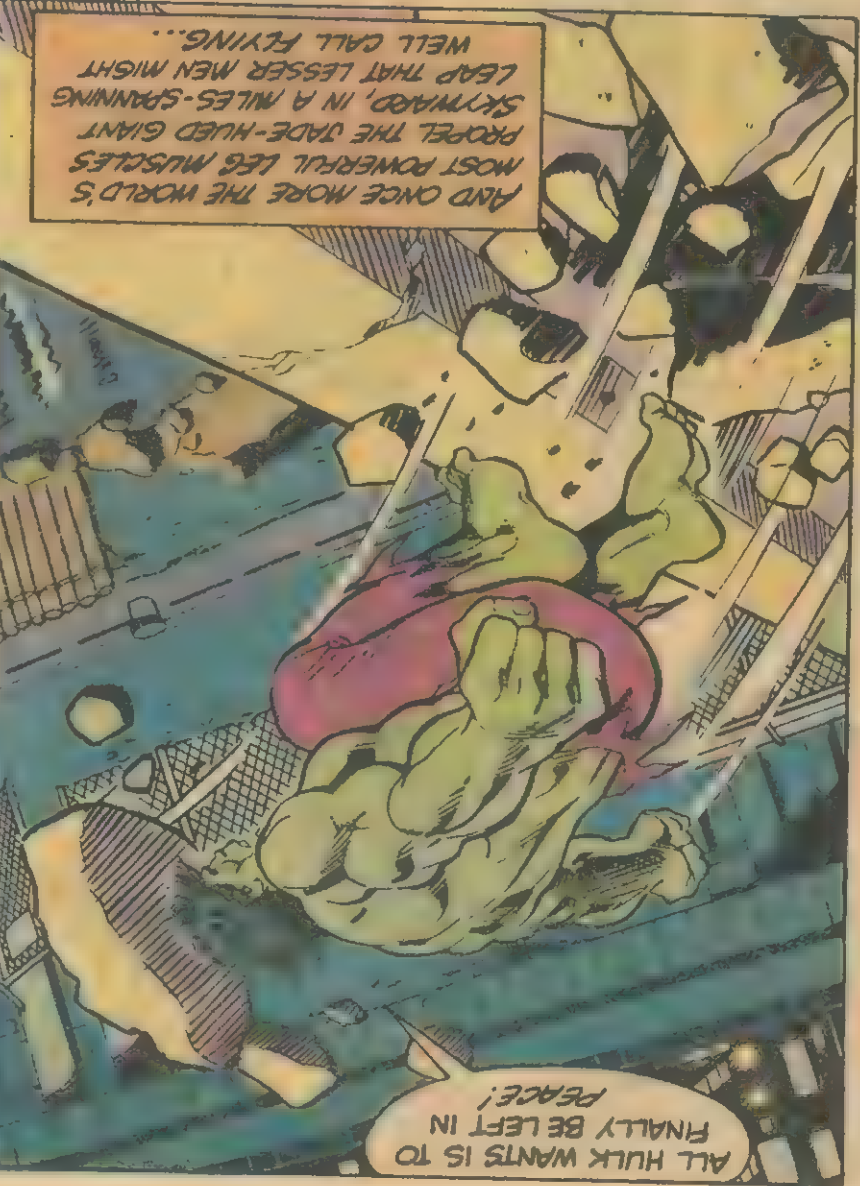
OF COURSE, SHAPER OF  
SPORT--: HEH HEH-- YOUR  
WISH IS MY COMMAND!  
I ONLY ASK ONE  
TEENSY-WEENSY  
LITTLE THING:

WILL SOMEBODY  
PLEASE TALK ME  
OUT OF THIS!



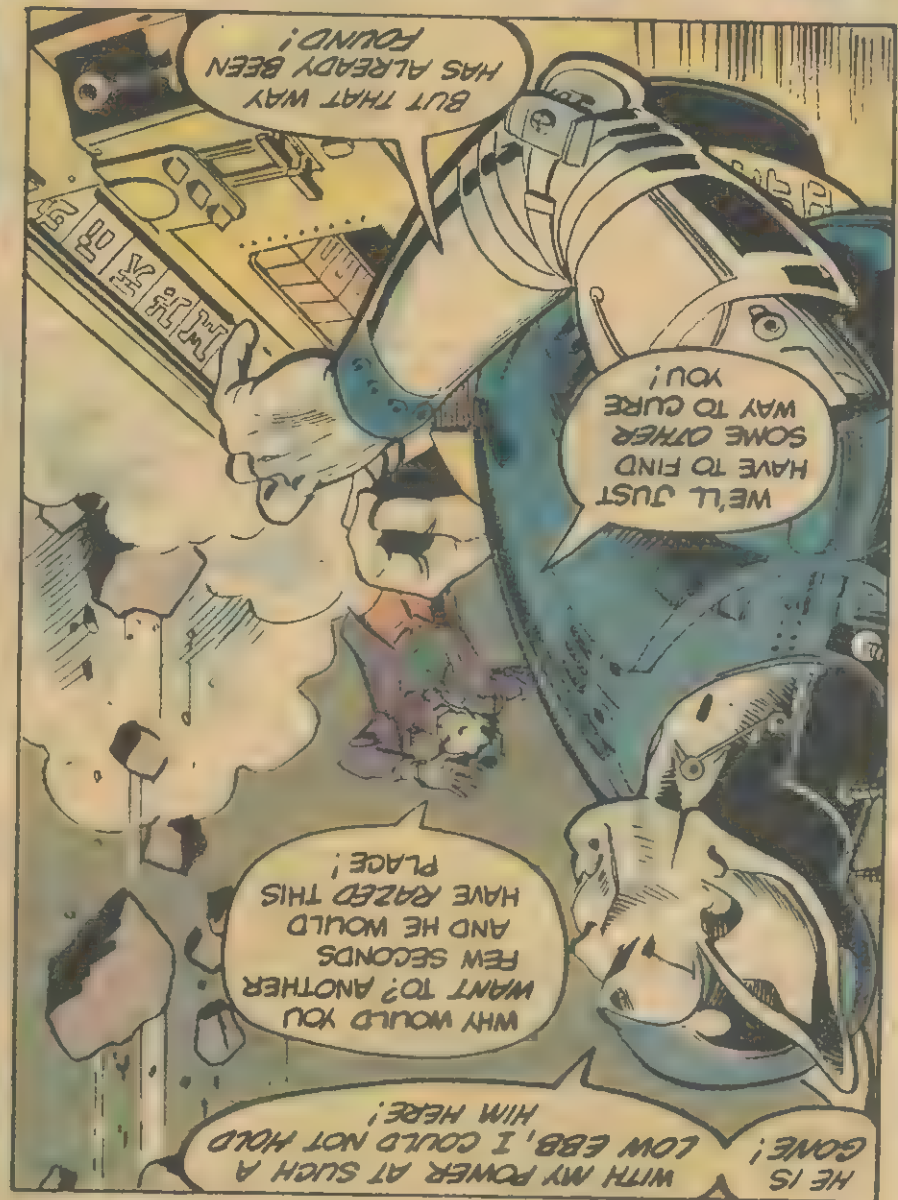
DID YOU NOT SEE  
HOW MY PAIN WAS  
ALLEGATED AS THE  
HULK DREW CLOSER?  
SOMETHING IN THE  
UNIQUE GAMMA  
RADIATION THE MAN-  
BRUTE HIMSELF EMITS  
WHEN ANGRY IS THE  
ANSWER TO MY  
PROBLEM!  
I NO LONGER  
NEED THE GAMMA-  
GUN-- I NEED  
THE HULK  
HIMSELF!

AND I NEED  
--TO FIND  
HIM FOR ME!



AND ONCE MORE THE WORLD'S  
MOST POWERFUL LEG MUSCLES  
PROPEL THE JADE-HUED GIANT  
SKYWARD, IN A MILES-SPANNING  
LEAP THAT LESSER MEN MIGHT  
WELL CALL FLYING...

ALL HULK WANTS IS TO  
PEACE!  
FINALLY BE LEFT IN



HE IS  
WITH MY POWER AT SUCH A  
LOW EBB, I COULD NOT HOLD  
HIM HERE!

WHY WOULD YOU  
WANT TO? ANOTHER  
FEW SECONDS  
AND HE WOULD  
HAVE RAZED THIS  
PLACE!

WE'LL JUST  
HAVE TO FIND  
SOME OTHER  
WAY TO CURE  
YOU!

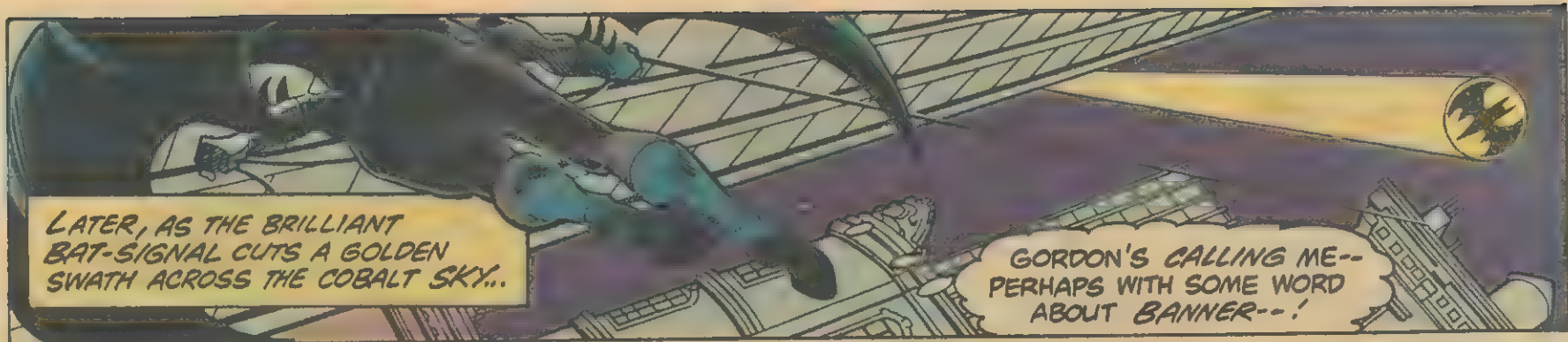
BUT THAT WAY  
HAS ALREADY BEEN  
FOUND!



HULK DOES NOT KNOW--  
AND HULK DOES NOT  
CARE! HULK IS JUST  
TIRED...

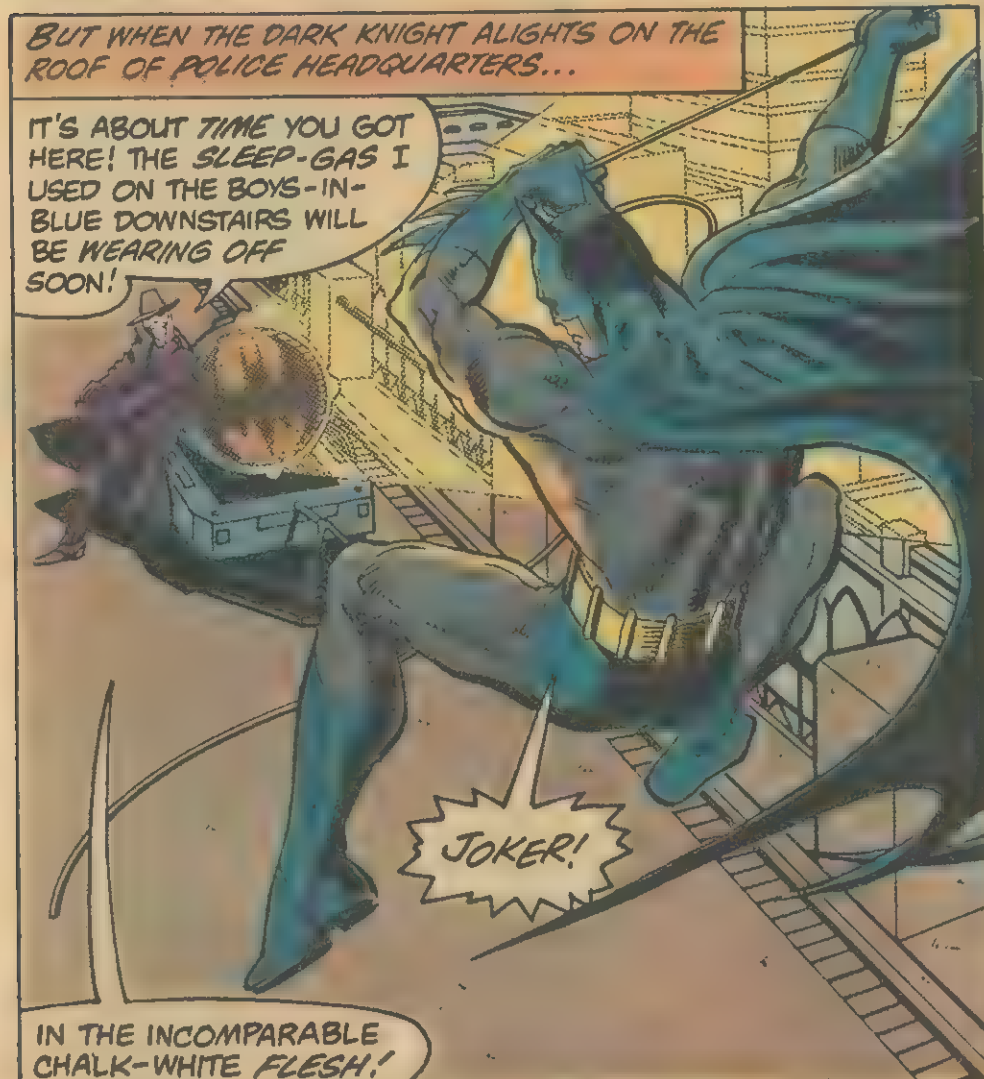
...TIRED OF  
THINKING...  
TIRED OF  
FIGHTING...  
...TIRED  
OF EVERY-  
THING...





LATER, AS THE BRILLIANT BAT-SIGNAL CUTS A GOLDEN SWATH ACROSS THE COBALT SKY...

GORDON'S CALLING ME-- PERHAPS WITH SOME WORD ABOUT BANNER--!



BUT WHEN THE DARK KNIGHT ALIGHTS ON THE ROOF OF POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE! THE SLEEP-GAS I USED ON THE BOYS-IN-BLUE DOWNSTAIRS WILL BE WEARING OFF SOON!

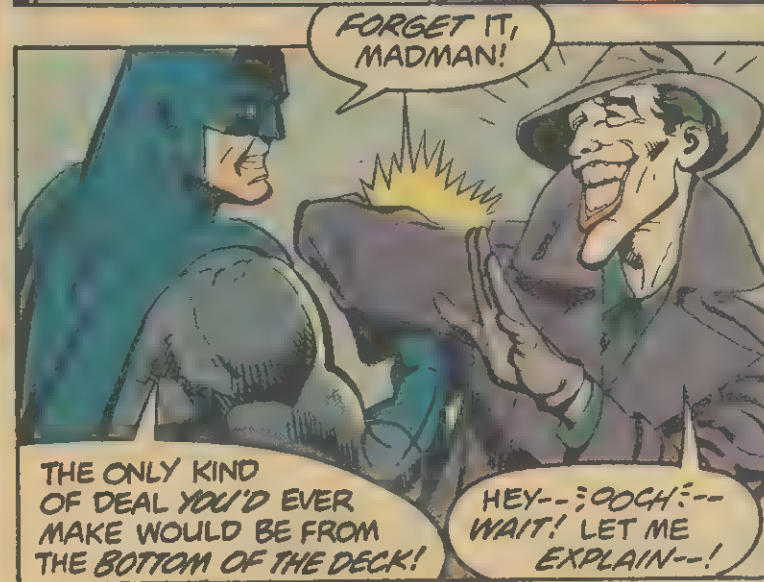
JOKER!

IN THE INCOMPARABLE CHALK-WHITE FLESH!



BUT BEFORE YOU GET PHYSICAL AS PER USUAL, THERE'S A LITTLE DEAL I'D LIKE TO OFFER YOU!

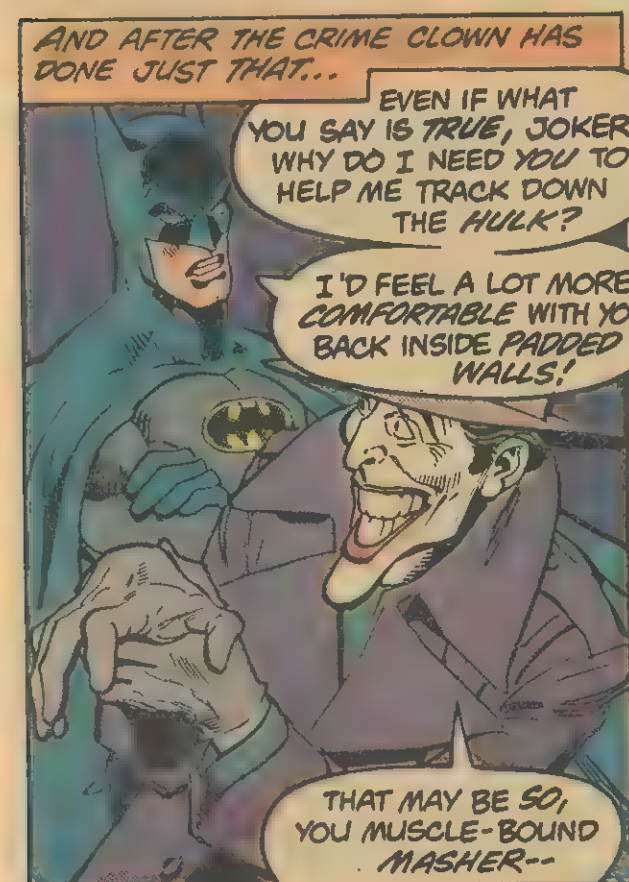
HERE'S MY HAND ON IT!



FORGET IT, MADMAN!

THE ONLY KIND OF DEAL YOU'D EVER MAKE WOULD BE FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE DECK!

HEY--! OUCH!-- WAIT! LET ME EXPLAIN--!

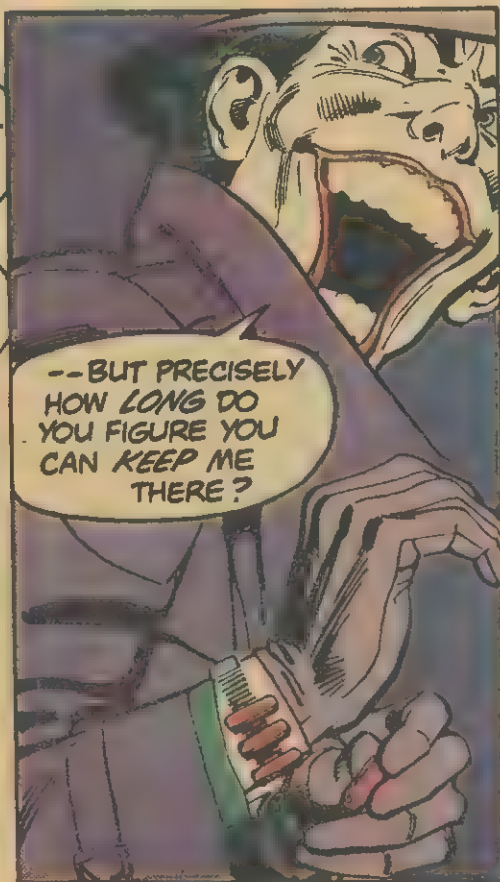


AND AFTER THE CRIME CLOWN HAS DONE JUST THAT...

EVEN IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, JOKER-- WHY DO I NEED YOU TO HELP ME TRACK DOWN THE HULK?

I'D FEEL A LOT MORE COMFORTABLE WITH YOU BACK INSIDE PADDED WALLS!

THAT MAY BE SO, YOU MUSCLE-BOUND MASHER--



--BUT PRECISELY HOW LONG DO YOU FIGURE YOU CAN KEEP ME THERE?



THAT'S UP TO THE COURTS TO--EH?

SMOKE-BOMB! HE MUST'VE HAD IT HIDDEN UP HIS SLEEVE!

HAHAHAHA

CHUFF!

GOT TO GRAB HIM BEFORE HE--



--KNOWING THAT HIS  
AIMLESS BOUNDING MAY  
HAVE TAKEN THE MAN-BRUTE  
ANYWHERE BY NOW, EVEN  
OUT OF GOTHAM--  
--AND KNOWING THE  
PRICE THE WORLD  
WILL PAY IF HE IS NOT  
FOUND SOON.

THROUGH THE  
WINDING STREETS  
AND ALLEYS  
OF GOTHAM,  
THESE MIS-  
MATCHED  
MANHUNTERS  
CARRY THEIR  
QUEST FOR THE  
ELUSIVE HULK--



PUT 'ER  
THERE...  
PARTNER!

FORGET IT! I ONLY  
SAID I'D WORK  
WITH YOU!

I NEVER  
SAID I'D HAVE  
TO LIKE IT!

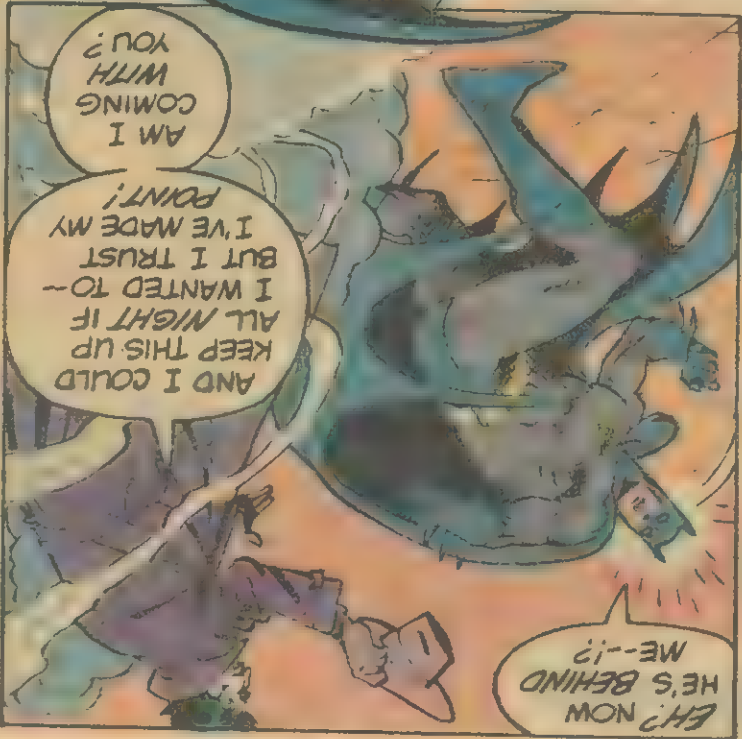


GO AHEAD,  
BATMAN, PLAY  
HIGH-AND-MIGHTY  
WITH ME... WHILE  
YOU CAN!

BUT WHEN THIS IS  
OVER, THE WHOLE  
WORLD WILL BE  
PLAYING BY MY  
RULES!



--DISAPPEARS.



EH? NOW  
HE'S BEHIND  
ME--!?!

AND I COULD  
KEEP THIS UP  
ALL NIGHT IF  
I WANTED TO--  
BUT I TRUST  
I'VE MADE MY  
POINT!

AM I  
COMING  
WITH  
YOU?



ALL RIGHT, JOKER--  
FOR NOW!

BUT I STILL  
DON'T TRUST  
YOU HALF  
AS FAR AS I  
CAN THROW  
YOU!

NATURALLY  
NOT! WHO  
DOES?



THUS, WHEN AT LAST THEY COME UPON THE HULK, ONCE MORE VENTING HIS SEEMINGLY-INEXHAUSTIBLE RAGE, THEY ALMOST BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF...

AYE--ALMOST.

LITTLE MEN TRIED TO HURT HULK WHILE HULK SLEPT IN ALLEY!

NOW HULK WILL PUT LITTLE MEN TO SLEEP--FOREVER!!

NEXT TIME YOU WANNA MUG SOMEONE, MORTY--DO IT ALONE!

BOB'S MEAT

HULK--LISTEN TO ME!

HULK--WAIT! PUT THOSE BOYS DOWN!

HUH--?!

YOU AGAIN--?!

YOU TRIED TO PROTECT THOSE WHO WOULD HURT HULK--

--SO HULK WILL SMASH YOU INSTEAD!

HULK--NO! WE'RE NOT HERE TO FIGHT WITH YOU!

WE ONLY WANT TO TALK!

WHY DON'T WE JUST PHONE HIM, BATS--

--SAY, LONG DISTANCE?!

BAH! HULK HATES TALK!

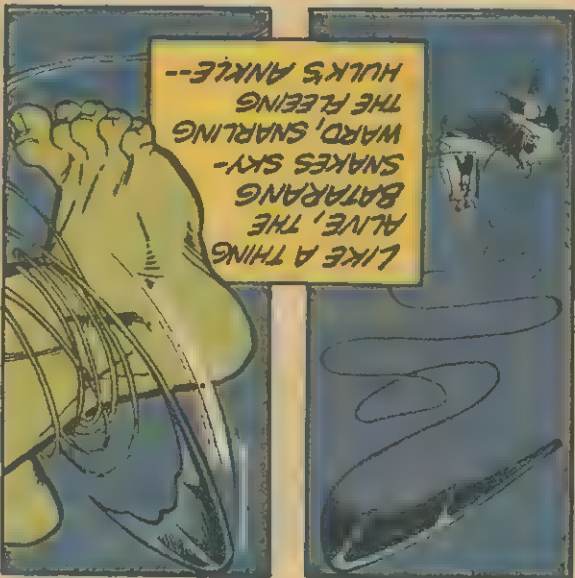
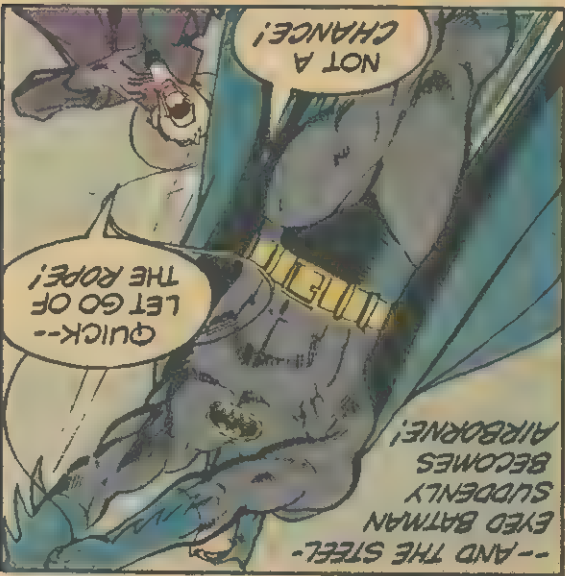
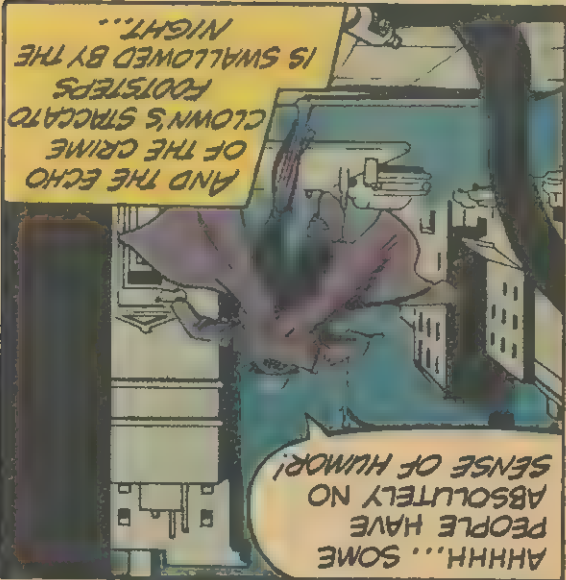
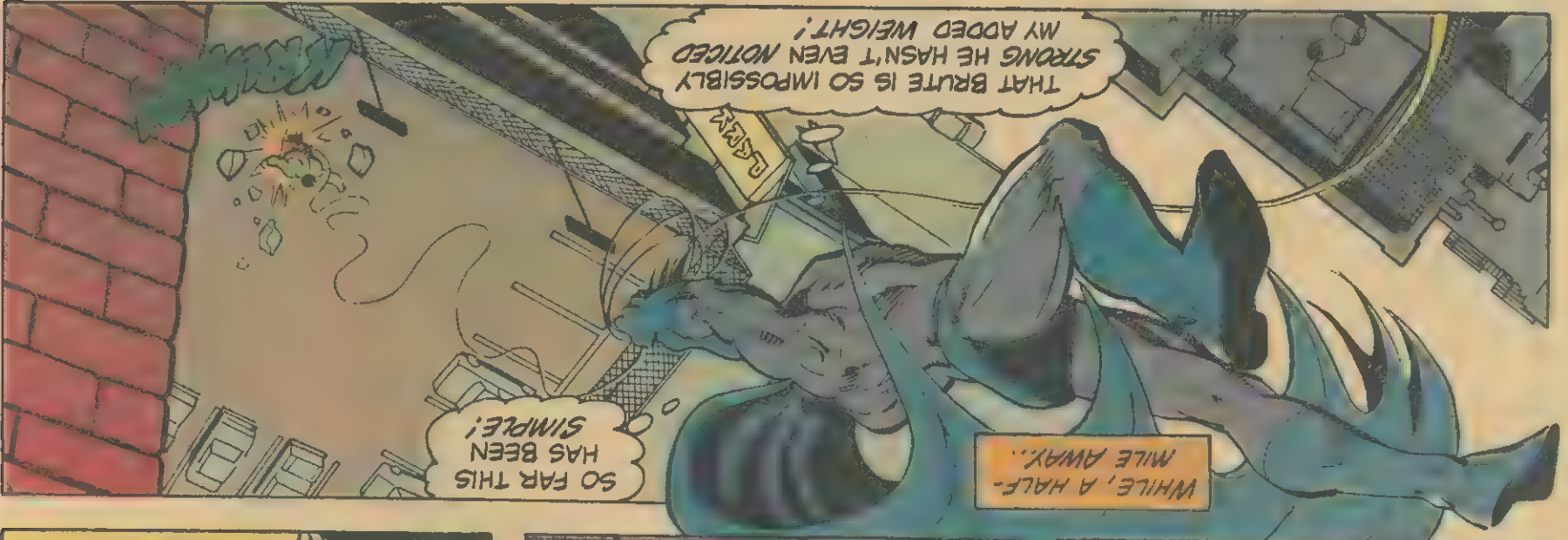
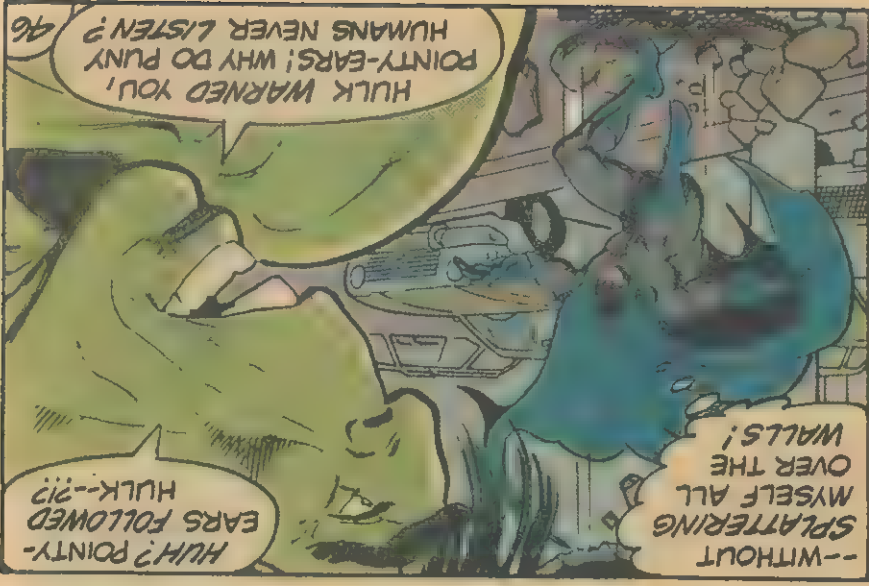
PUNY HUMANS TWIST THEIR WORDS TO TRICK HULK--TO CONFUSE HULK--!

HULK COULD CRUSH PUNY HUMANS LIKE THIS!

BUT WHY BOTHER--WHEN HULK CAN LEAVE PUNY HUMANS AND THEIR TWISTED WORDS BEHIND!

IF YOU ARE SMART, LITTLE MEN--YOU WILL NOT FOLLOW HULK!









I TOLD YOU, HULK--  
I HAVE NO CHOICE!

AND NO MORE TIME  
TO WASTE EITHER!

THIS SLEEPING GAS TOOK HIM  
OUT CLEANLY BEFORE--



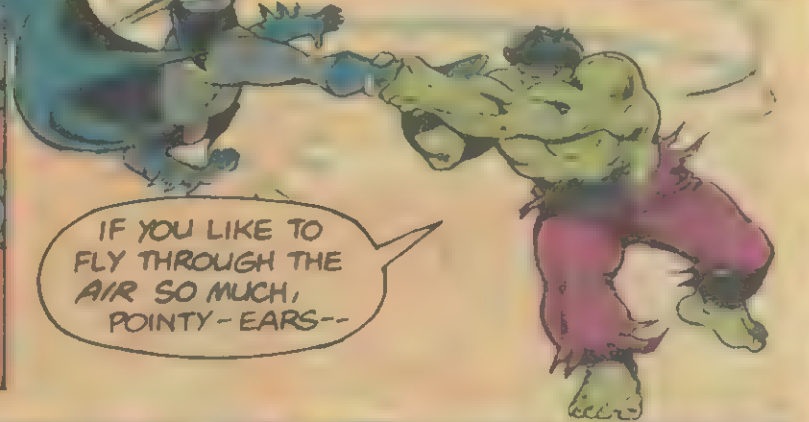
BUT THIS  
TIME...

BAH! POINTY-  
EARS WILL NOT  
TRICK HULK  
WITH STUPID GAS  
AGAIN!

INCREDIBLE!  
HE BLEW THE GAS  
AWAY WITH A  
SINGLE PINWHEEL-  
WAVE OF HIS  
OVERSIZED  
ARM--!



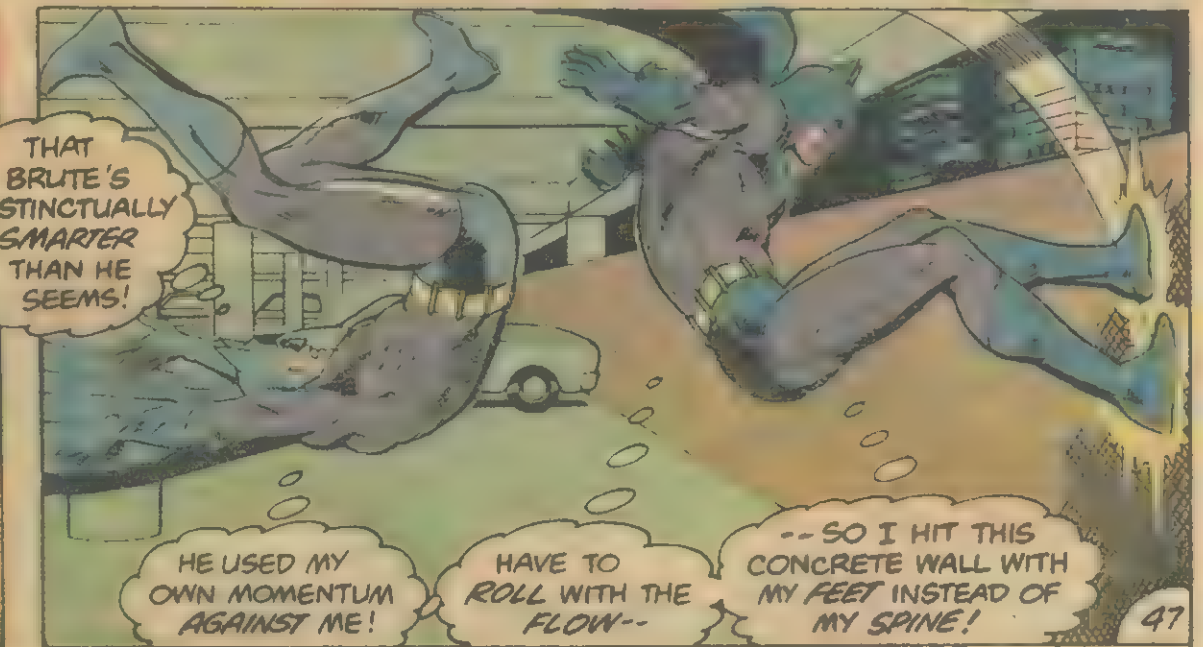
AND POINTY-EARS WILL NOT  
KICK HULK AGAIN EITHER!



IF YOU LIKE TO  
FLY THROUGH THE  
AIR SO MUCH,  
POINTY-EARS--



--HULK  
WILL  
HELP  
YOU!!



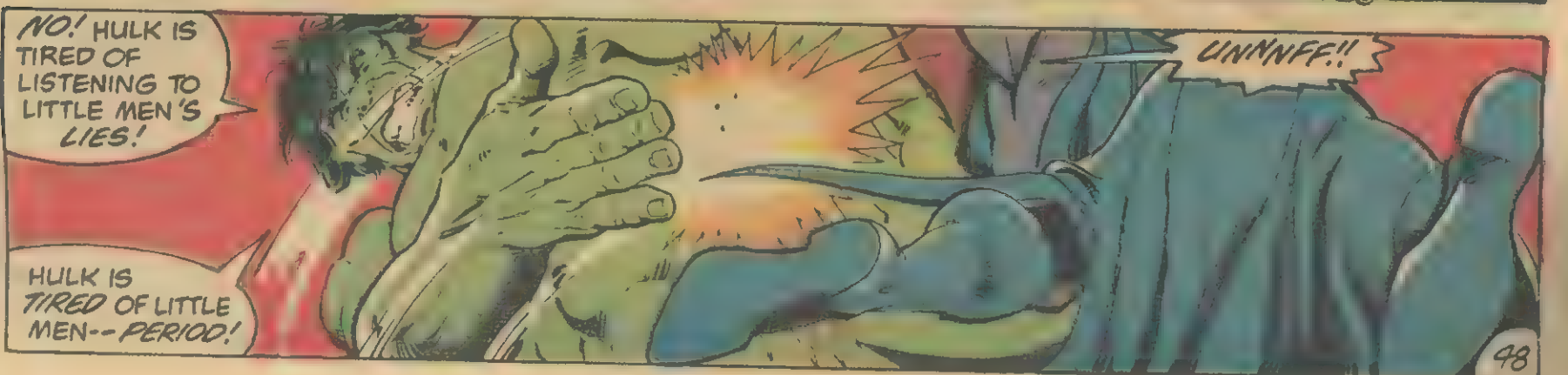
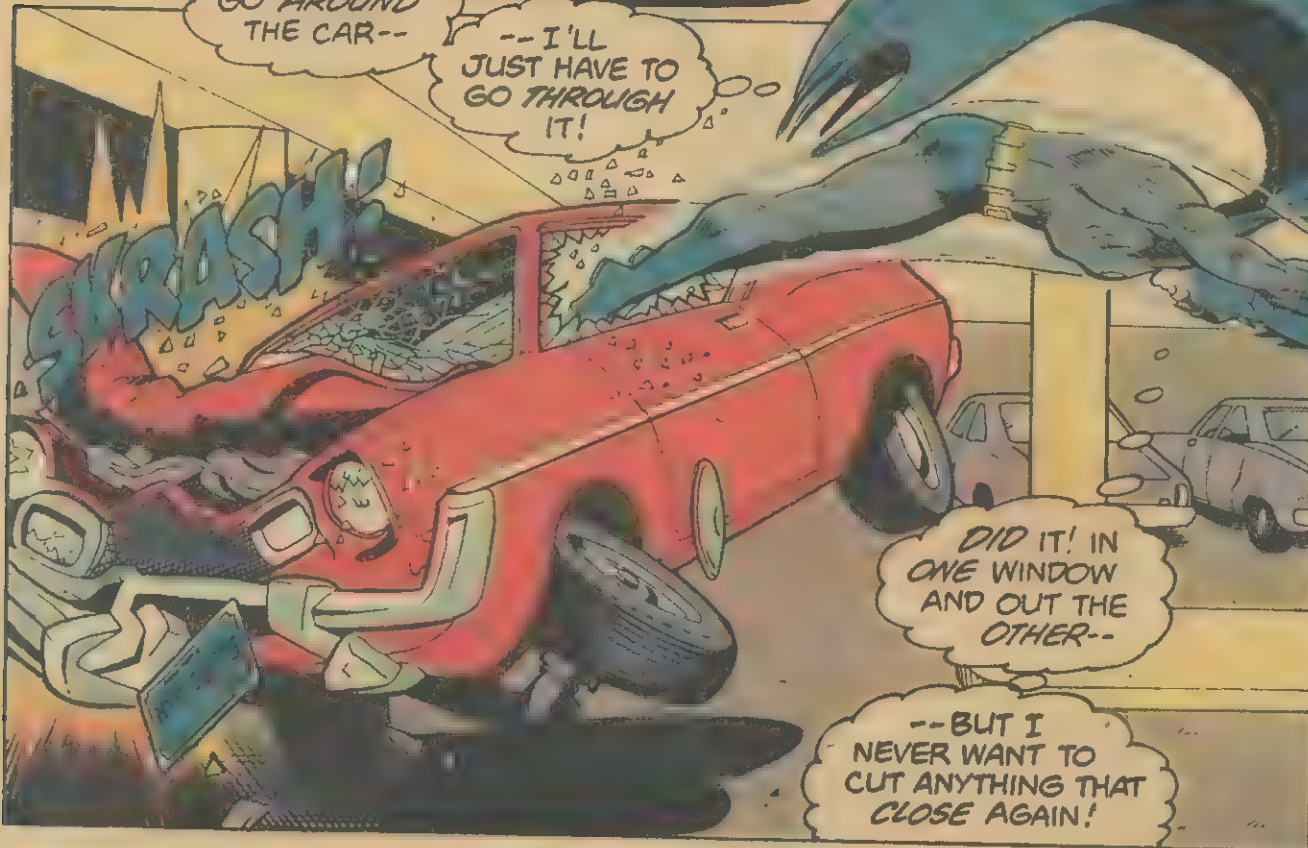
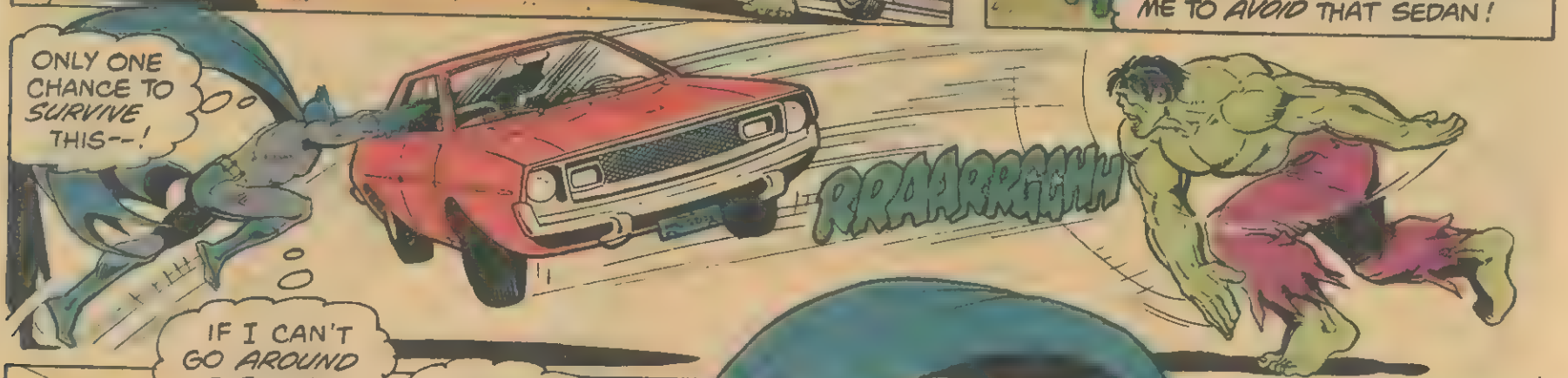
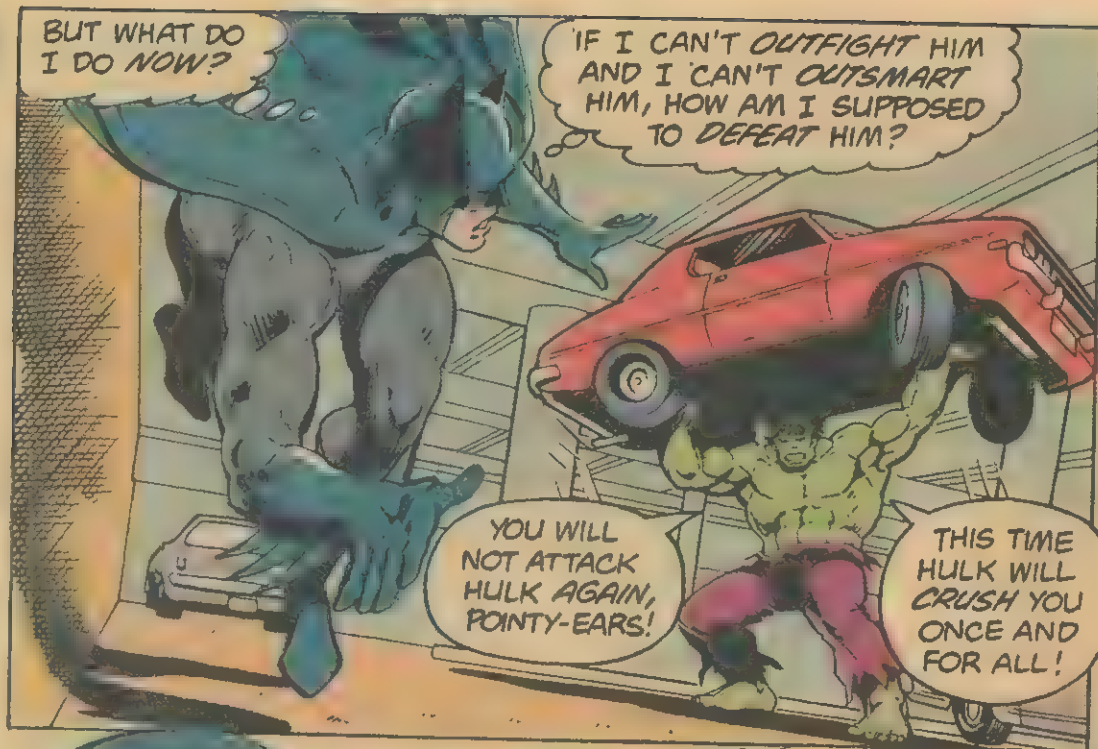
THAT  
BRUTE'S  
INSTINCTUALLY  
SMARTER  
THAN HE  
SEEMS!

HE USED MY  
OWN MOMENTUM  
AGAINST ME!

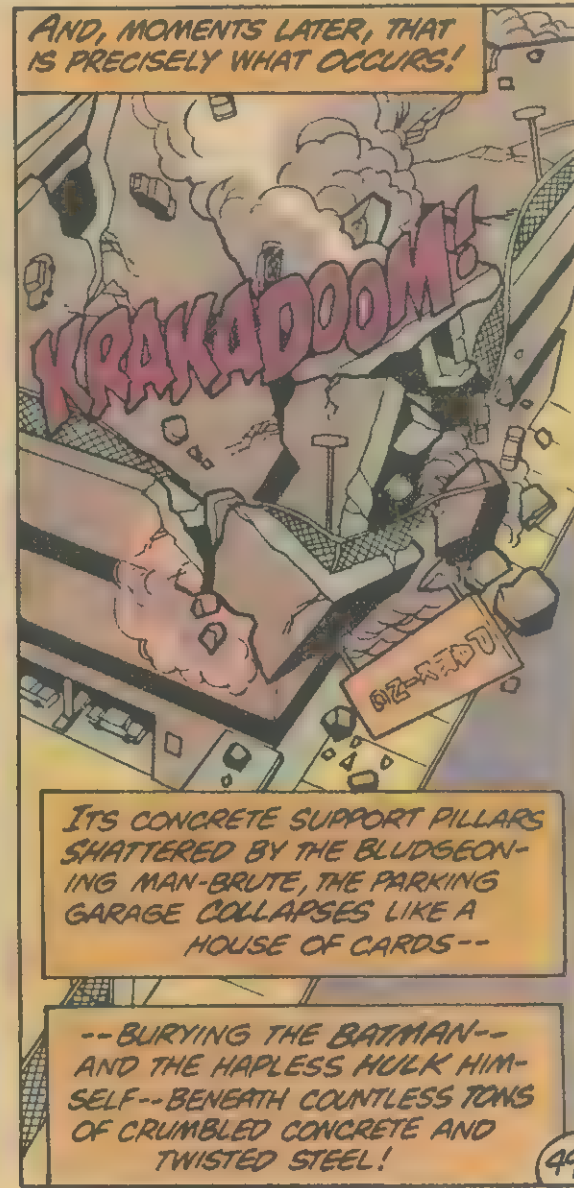
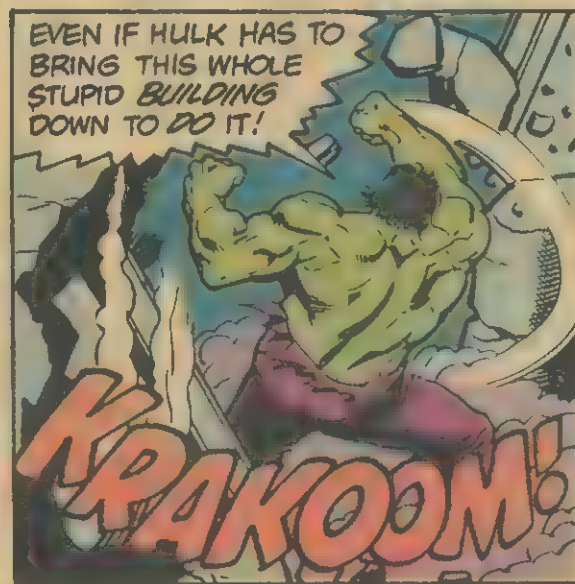
HAVE TO  
ROLL WITH THE  
FLOW--

-- SO I HIT THIS  
CONCRETE WALL WITH  
MY FEET INSTEAD OF  
MY SPINE!













50

EH? IS  
SOMEBODY  
THERE IN  
THE  
DARKNESS?  
IS THERE SOMETHING  
AN OLD BLIND MAN  
CAN DO TO HELP  
YOU, FRIEND?



ALWAYS  
MORE...  
...LIKE  
HIM!

NOW, LITTLE MAN--  
YOU DIE!



SOME TIME LATER, AS THE STILL-  
SEETHING MAN-BRUTE AIMLESSLY  
WANDERS THE DESERTED STREETS...  
STUPID LITTLE MEN! HULK  
WOULD SMASH THEM ALL  
IF HULK COULD--  
--BUT NO MATTER HOW  
MANY HULK SMASHES,  
THERE ARE ALWAYS MORE!



WELL, BATS--WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED  
TO DO NOW? JADE-JAWS DOESN'T  
EXACTLY SEEM EAGER  
TO TALK TO US!  
DON'T  
WORRY,  
JOKER--ONE  
WAY OR  
ANOTHER,  
HE WILL!  
AND BY THE  
WAY--STOP CALLING  
ME "BATS"!



SPARE ME THE HUMOR,  
JOKER! WHEN THE CEILING  
COLLAPSED, I THREW  
MYSELF UNDER THESE  
CROSS-BEAMS!  
THEY ACTED AS A  
CANOPY OF SORTS TO  
PROTECT ME FROM THE  
REST OF THE RUBBLE!

AND I SHOULD  
KNOW--I'VE  
TRIED OFTEN  
ENOUGH!

YOU REALLY  
ARE A TOUGH  
ONE TO KILL,  
AREN'T YOU?

--NEVER DOUBTING  
THAT HE WILL  
FIND THE BATMAN  
HERE, ALIVE AND  
RELATIVELY  
UNHARMED...



--LEAVING ANOTHER,  
MORE GAUDILY-  
GARBED FIGURE TO  
SCRAMBLE THRU  
THE WRECKAGE--



--AND BOUNDS  
AWAY INTO  
THE DARK--



FOR SEVERAL MOMENTS, THE WORLD  
IS SMOKE AND SILENCE--THEN A  
BRUTISH EMERALD FIGURE FINALLY  
PULLS HIMSELF FROM THE RUBBLE--



FRIEND: AT THE SOUND OF THE WORD, THE GREEN GOLIATH PAUSES... PONDERS... THEN SLOWLY UNCLENCHES HIS FISTS!

HULK, OLD MAN! *NOBODY* CAN HELP HULK!

YOU SOUND TROUBLED, MY FRIEND.

OLD MAN, TROUBLE IS ALL HULK KNOWS!

THEN COME-- STAY WITH ME FOR A WHILE!

IF YOU'D LIKE TO TELL ME ABOUT IT-- I'D LIKE TO LISTEN.

MAYBE OLD MAN IS RIGHT... MAYBE HULK SHOULD HELP PUNY HUMANS...

...IF HULK ONLY KNEW WHERE TO START!

AND IF THAT'S NOT A CUE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT *IS*!

IF YOU WANT TO HELP THE WORLD, HULK-- JUST COME ALONG WITH ME!

HUHN?

HULK CANNOT STAY LONG, OLD MAN-- IT IS NOT SAFE!

WHEREVER HULK GOES, PUNY HUMANS FOLLOW HULK-- AROUND HULK-- TRY TO DESTROY HULK...

...AND HULK DOES NOT EVEN KNOW WHY!

NEITHER DO I...

...BUT MAYBE IF YOU'D STOP FIGHTING PEOPLE AND TRY HELPING THEM A LITTLE, THINGS COULD CHANGE FOR YOU.

IF A FELLA WANTS TO HAVE FRIENDS, FIRST HE HAS TO BE A FRIEND.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M TRYING TO TELL YOU... FRIEND?

NO, MY FRIEND-- YOU'RE ACTING WITHOUT THINKING AGAIN!

IF YOU TRULY WANT TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE, YOU MUST GO WITH THE JOKER!

THE MAN'S TALKING SENSE, GREENIE-- LISTEN TO HIM!

WHAT IS STUPID WHITE-FACE DOING HERE?

KEEP AWAY FROM HULK, WHITE-FACE-- OR HULK WILL SMASH!

HUHN! THEN HULK WILL GO WITH WHITE-FACE... FOR NOW!

JUST SO LONG AS YOU GO, HULK-- THAT'S ALL THAT REALLY MATTERS!



CHAPTER FIVE

# WHEN MADNESS REIGNS...

LIKE RIPPLES ACROSS A POND, WAVES OF PURE CREATIVE ENERGY EXPAND OUTWARD FROM A NOW-FAMILIAR WAREHOUSE...

FOR THE TEMPORARY REMISSION HE EXPERIENCED AFTER HIS ENCOUNTER WITH THE HULK HAS ENDED--

--AND THE SHAPER OF WORLDS IS OVERWHELMINGLY MAD ONCE MORE!



ARRRRGGHHH!

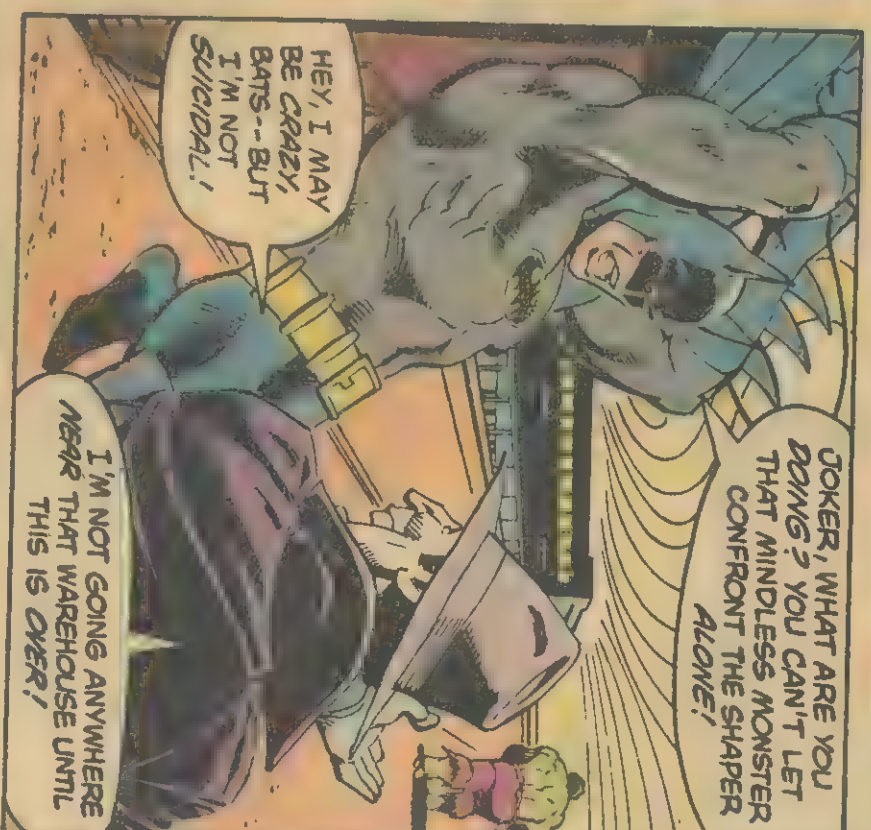
WHILE, JUST BEYOND THE INFLUENCE OF THE EVER-EXPANDING ENERGY-BANDS...



THERE'S THE PLACE, HULK-- YOU'LL FIND THE SHAPER WAITING FOR YOU!

GO GET 'EM, GREENIE-- AND DON'T LET ANYTHING STAND IN YOUR WAY!

WHAT--?!



HEY, I MAY BE CRAZY, BATS-- BUT I'M NOT SUICIDAL!

DUKER, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU CAN'T LET THAT MINDLESS MONSTER CONFRONT THE SHAPER ALONE!

I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE NEAR THAT WAREHOUSE UNTIL THIS IS OVER!

WHY, YOU SPINELESS WORM--!

SOMEONE HAS TO GO WITH THE HULK-- TO SUPPORT HIM-- GUIDE HIM--!

WELL, BETTER YOU THAN ME, BATS-- BETTER YOU THAN ME!

HULK-- WAIT! I'M COMING WITH YOU!

HUH? WHAT IS POINTY-EARS DOING HERE?

I'M HERE TO HELP YOU, HULK... IF YOU'LL HAVE ME.

HULK THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD!



BEFORE THIS IS FINISHED, FRIEND-- WE MAY BOTH BE!



AND, AS IF IN RESPONSE TO THE DARK KNIGHT'S UNSPOKEN THOUGHT, THE AIR SUDDENLY SHUDDERS-- CONGEALS--

--AND MURDER COMES STRIDING OUT OF THE MIST!

HUH?? IT IS HULK'S ENEMIES... RHINO... ABOMINATION... AND LEADER!

NOT TO MENTION MY OWN TWO-FACE... KILLER MOTH... AND SCARECROW!

BUT THEY CAN'T BE REAL-- ONLY MANIFESTATIONS OF OUR OWN MEMORIES!

BUT MEMORIES OR NOT, THEY CAN STILL KILL US-- IF WE LET THEM!

BAH! HULK HAS FOUGHT LEADER'S MURDER-MODULE BEFORE--

--AND WON!

I DON'T DOUBT THAT FOR AN INSTANT, HULK!

BUT THIS IS NO ORDINARY BATTLE WE'RE FIGHTING HERE--

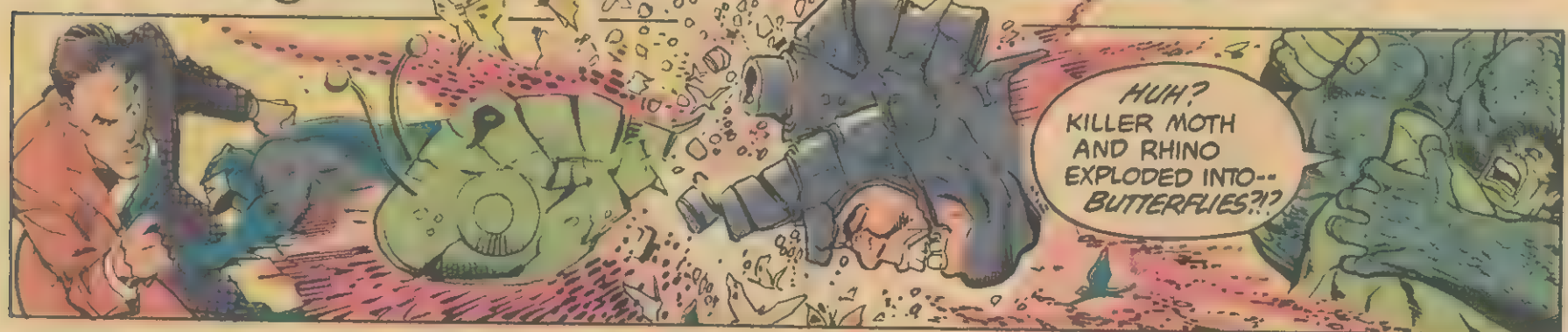
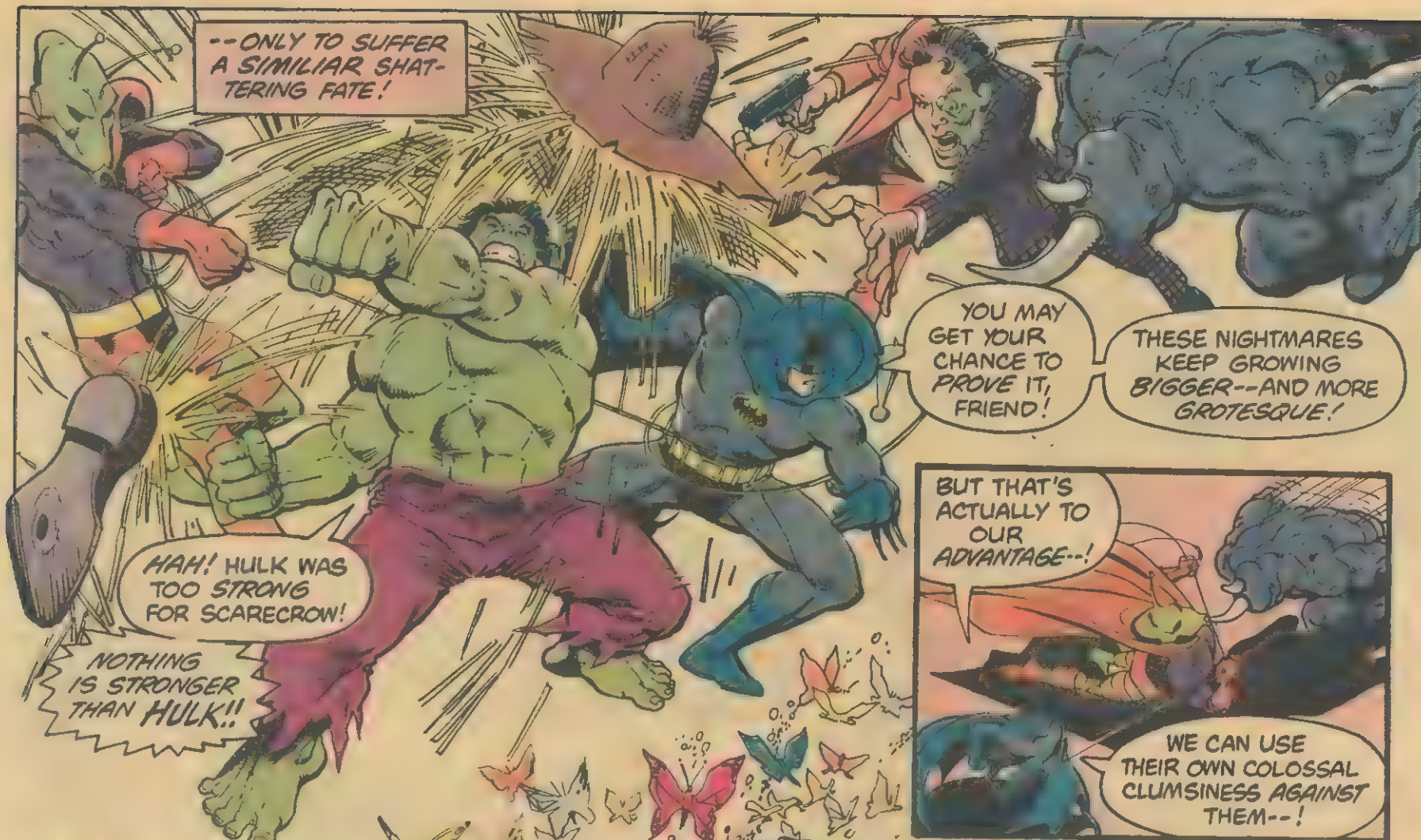
--AND THESE LIVING NIGHTMARES OUT-NUMBER US THREE-TO-ONE!

HEE HEE HEE

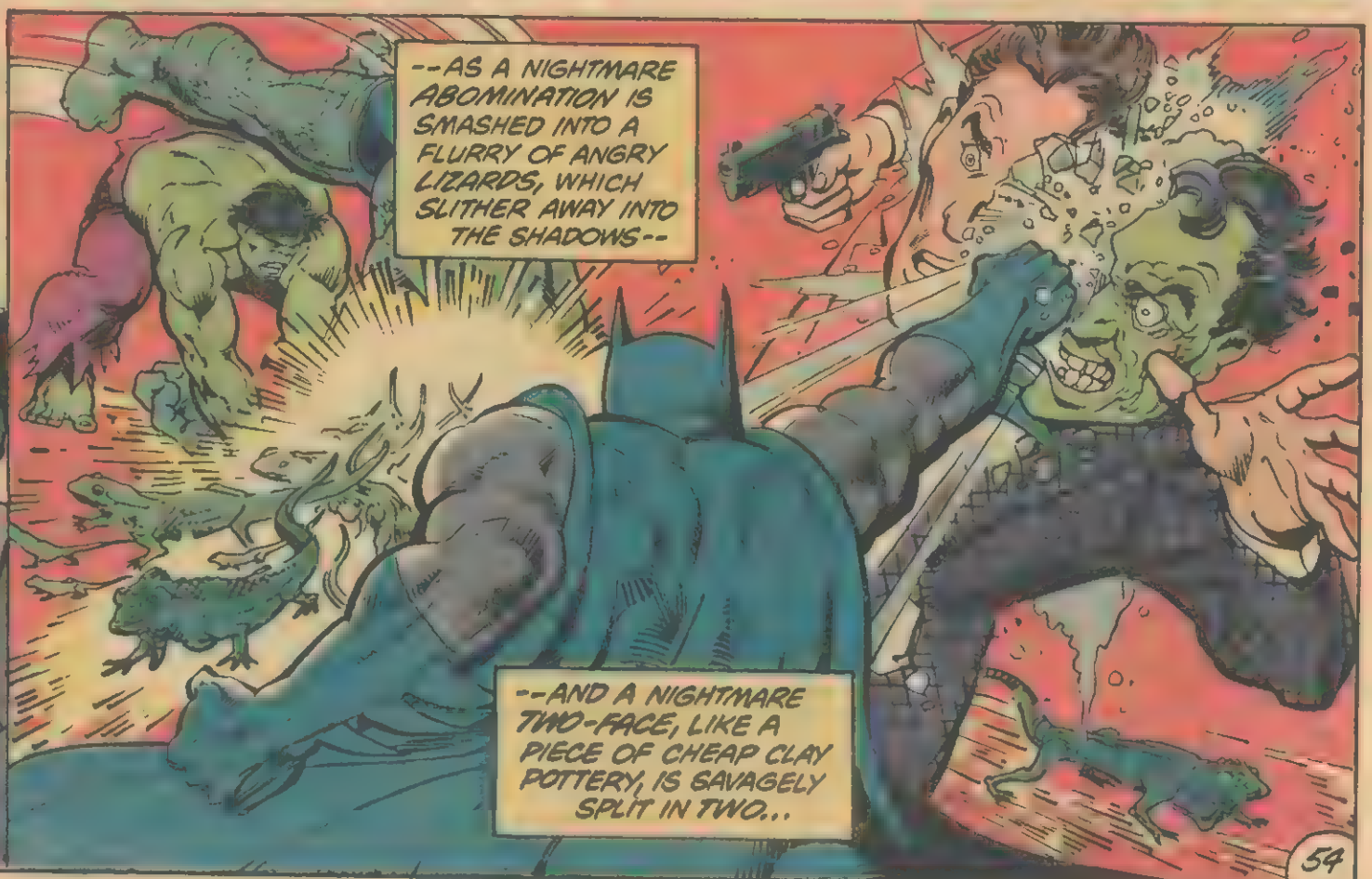
SPINDLY LEGS TANGLED, THE MURDER-MODULE AND ITS MONSTROUS MASTER TOPPLE HEAVILY, SHATTERING LIKE SO MUCH DELICATE CRYSTAL--

--WHILE A CACKLING SCARECROW WRAPS HIS MISSHAPEN BURLAP FINGERS TIGHTLY ABOUT A THICK EMERALD THROAT--





WHILE, STANDING ON THE SO-CALLED SIDELINES, A NERVOUS JOKER WATCHES THE INCREDIBLE COMBAT WITH MIXED EMOTIONS--





FOR A MOMENT, THE BATMAN AND THE HULK  
STAND BACK-TO-BACK, READY FOR WHATEVER  
MIGHT COME NEXT--

--AND WHEN NOTHING  
COMES, THEY CONTINUE  
THEIR DESPERATE RACE  
TO THE WAREHOUSE...

DOOR'S  
LOCKED!  
I'LL HAVE TO  
PICK IT!

BAH!  
PUNY DOOR  
WILL NOT  
KEEP OUT  
HULK!!

PERHAPS NOT--BUT SOMETHING CERTAINLY  
STOPS THE MAN-BRUTE'S CHARGE...

HUH? HULK HAS  
BEEN THROWN BACK--  
BY SOMETHING  
HULK CAN'T  
SEE!

I THINK I  
UNDERSTAND, HULK--

THE SHAPER  
IS RADIATING SO  
MUCH ENERGY,  
IT'S CREATED AN  
IMPENETRABLE  
BARRIER OF  
SOME SORT!

BARRIER  
IS STRONGER  
THAN HULK?

THAT'S IT!  
THAT'S THE  
SOLUTION!

IT CERTAINLY SEEMS  
THE BARRIER IS  
STRONGER, HULK!

NO! NOTHING IS  
STRONGER THAN  
HULK! NOTHING!!

HULK IS THE  
STRONGEST  
ONE THERE IS!!

WITH UN-  
IMAGINABLE  
FURY, THE  
HULK  
HAMMERS  
THE UNSEEN  
BARRIER--

--PIERCES  
IT--

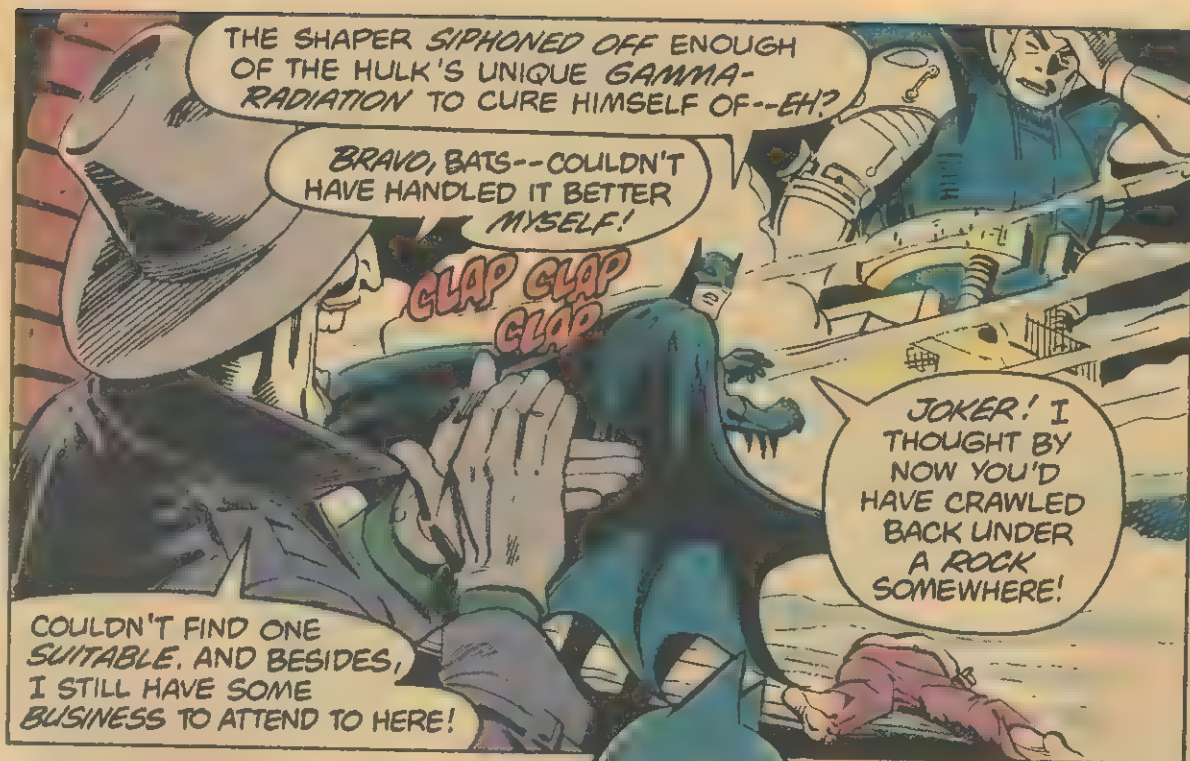
--AND THE  
SHAPER  
SCREAMS  
IN AGONY  
AS THE  
WORLD  
EXPLODES  
INTO  
EMERALD  
BRILLIANCE  
...

AND WHEN, AT LAST,  
THE GREEN LIGHT FADES,  
THE SHAPER OF WORLDS  
IS ONCE MORE SANE--

--AND THE  
RAMPAGING HULK  
IS ONCE MORE  
ROBERT BRUCE  
BANNER!

LOOKS LIKE  
IT'S FINALLY  
FINISHED!





THE SHAPER SIPHONED OFF ENOUGH OF THE HULK'S UNIQUE GAMMA-RADIATION TO CURE HIMSELF OF--EH?

BRAVO, BATS--COULDN'T HAVE HANDLED IT BETTER MYSELF!

CLAP CLAP CLAP

JOKER! I THOUGHT BY NOW YOU'D HAVE CRAWLED BACK UNDER A ROCK SOMEWHERE!

COULDN'T FIND ONE SUITABLE. AND BESIDES, I STILL HAVE SOME BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO HERE!

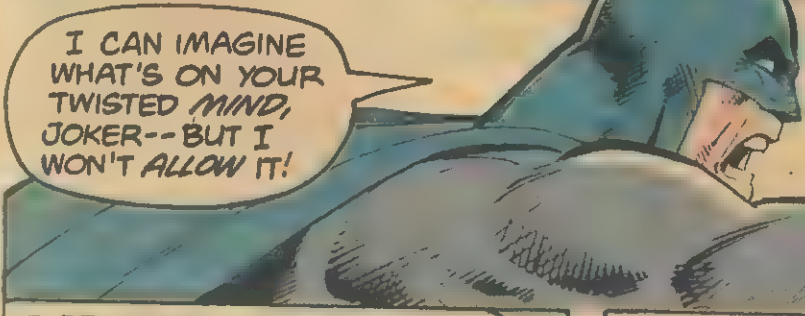


WELL, SHAPER-- HOW ABOUT IT?

I'VE HELD UP MY END OF THE DEAL--IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO DO LIKE-WISE!

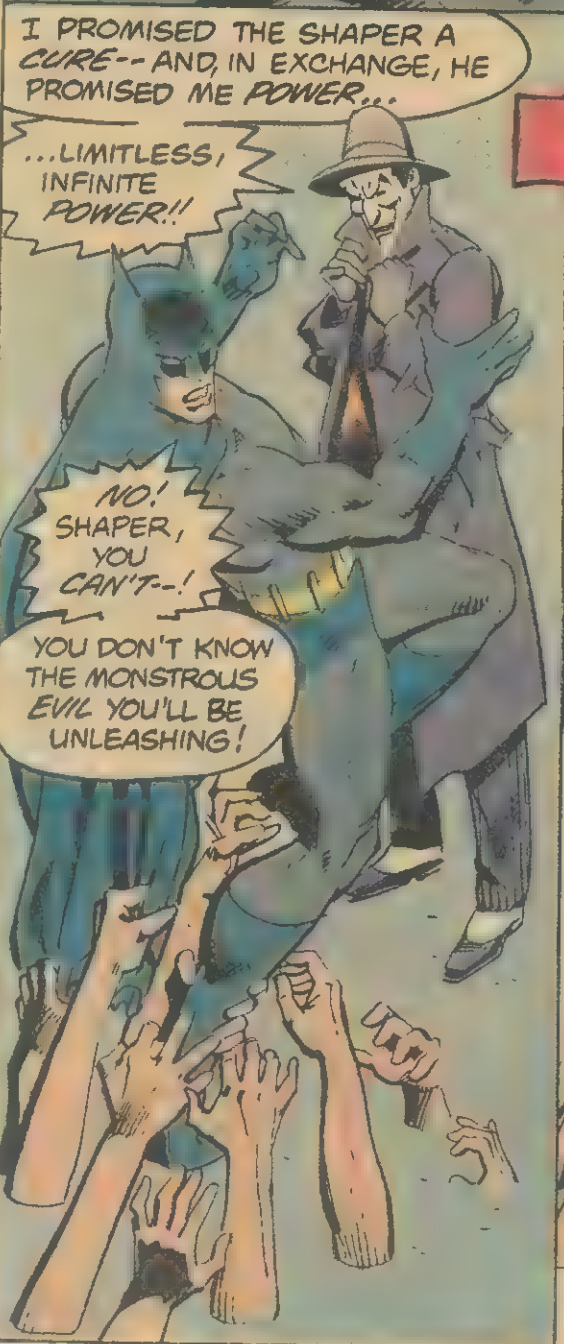
WHAT--?!

NO.



I CAN IMAGINE WHAT'S ON YOUR TWISTED MIND, JOKER--BUT I WON'T ALLOW IT!

FRANKLY, OLD SPORT-- THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN STOP IT!



I PROMISED THE SHAPER A CURE-- AND, IN EXCHANGE, HE PROMISED ME POWER...

...LIMITLESS, INFINITE POWER!!

NO! SHAPER, YOU CAN'T--!

YOU DON'T KNOW THE MONSTROUS EVIL YOU'LL BE UNLEASHING!



ON THE CONTRARY, EARTHMAN-- I KNOW PRECISELY!

BUT A BARGAIN IS A BARGAIN!



WHATEVER THE JOKER NOW DREAMS, I SHALL MAKE LIVE!

SEE, BATS-- I'M NO LONGER THE JOKER YOU ONCE KNEW!

FROM THIS MOMENT ON-- I'M KING OF THE WORLD!!



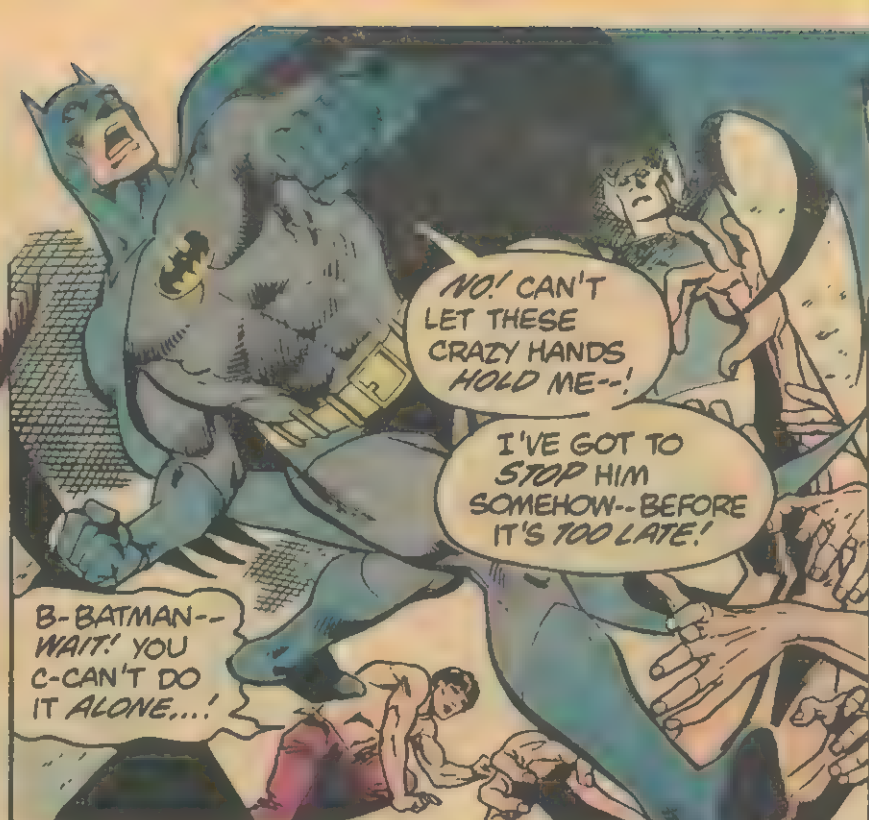


NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I REALLY MUST FLY!

HAHAHAHA

I DO HAVE A PLANET TO RULE, YOU KNOW--

--A PLANET I INTEND TO RESHAPE IN MY OWN ADORABLE IMAGE!



NO! CAN'T LET THESE CRAZY HANDS HOLD ME--!

I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM SOMEHOW--BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

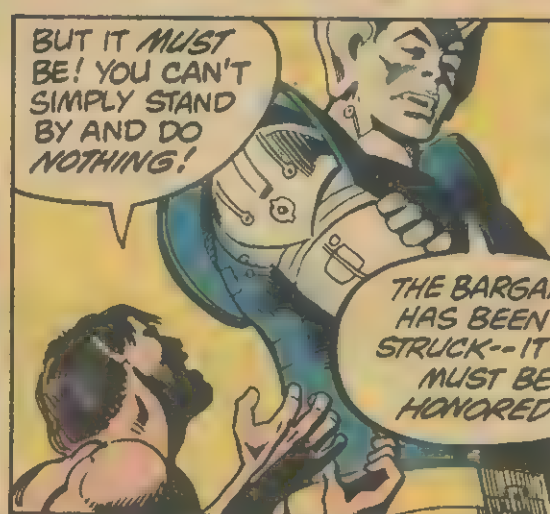
B-BATMAN-- WAIT! YOU C-CAN'T DO IT ALONE...!



SHAPER, WE'VE GOT TO GO AFTER HIM-- TRY TO HELP HIM!

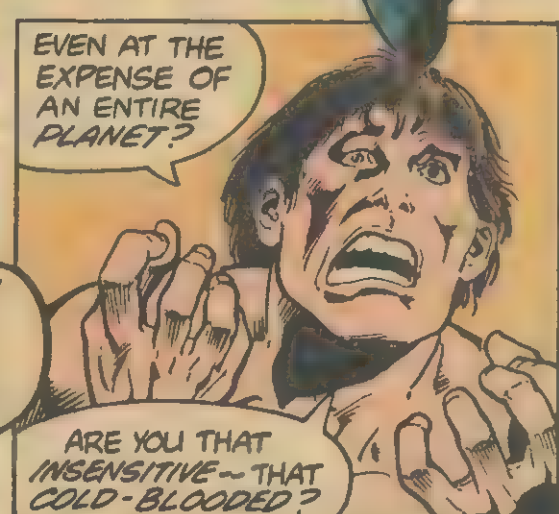
THE JOKER CAN KILL BATMAN WITH JUST A THOUGHT!

WHETHER THE BATMAN LIVES OR DIES IS NONE OF MY CONCERN!



BUT IT MUST BE! YOU CAN'T SIMPLY STAND BY AND DO NOTHING!

THE BARGAIN HAS BEEN STRUCK-- IT MUST BE HONORED!



EVEN AT THE EXPENSE OF AN ENTIRE PLANET?

ARE YOU THAT INSENSITIVE-- THAT COLD-BLOODED?



YOU COULD TAKE BACK THE JOKER'S POWER IF YOU WANTED TO--

-- BUT YOU'RE JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHERS... SELFISH, UNFEELING...



...AND FOR THAT-- HULK WILL SMASH!!



ROARING IN PROTEST, THE REBORN MAN-BRUTE HURLS HIMSELF AT THE SILENT SHAPER-- WHO STUDIES THE BEHEMOTH FOR AN INSTANT, AS IF WEIGHING THE WORTH OF HIS WORDS--

-- AND THEN, IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, SIMPLY SENDS THE HULK ELSEWHERE--

--FAR AWAY!



BACK IN GOTHAM CITY,  
MADNESS REIGNS!

REVELING IN HIS POWER, THE MAJESTIC  
JOKER HAS TRANSFORMED ITS PROUD  
TOWERS INTO SPIRES OF SPUN SUGAR  
AND CANDY CANES...

YET, SURPRISINGLY,  
ALL THE PEOPLE  
HERE ARE HAPPY--

--ALL, THAT  
IS, SAVE  
ONE!

OKAY,  
JOKER--  
FUNTIME IS  
OVER!

IS IT,  
BATS.?

WHAT--?!?

I'D SAY THE FUN'S  
ONLY BEGINNING!

INCREDIBLE!  
HE MERELY  
GLANCED AT ME--

--AND  
TURNED ME INTO  
A CLOWN?!

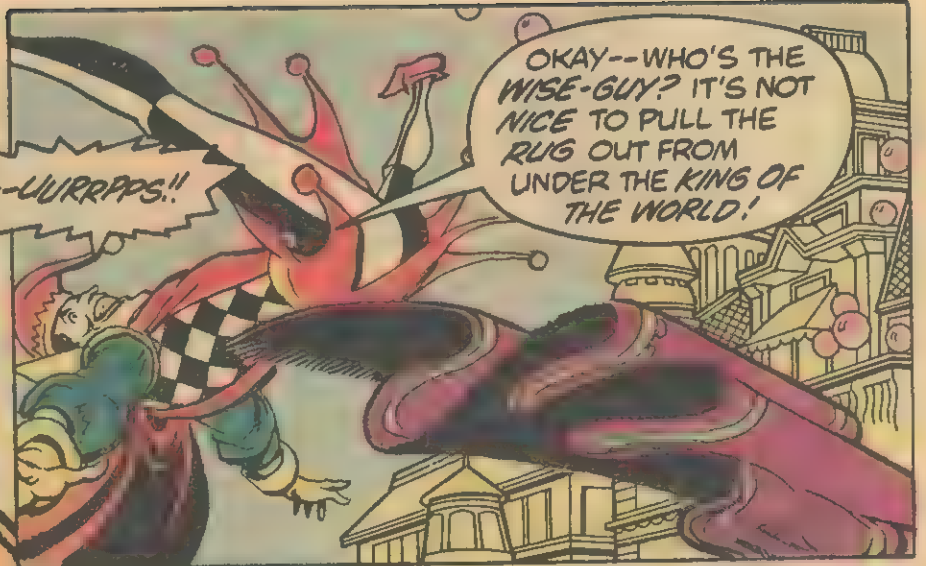
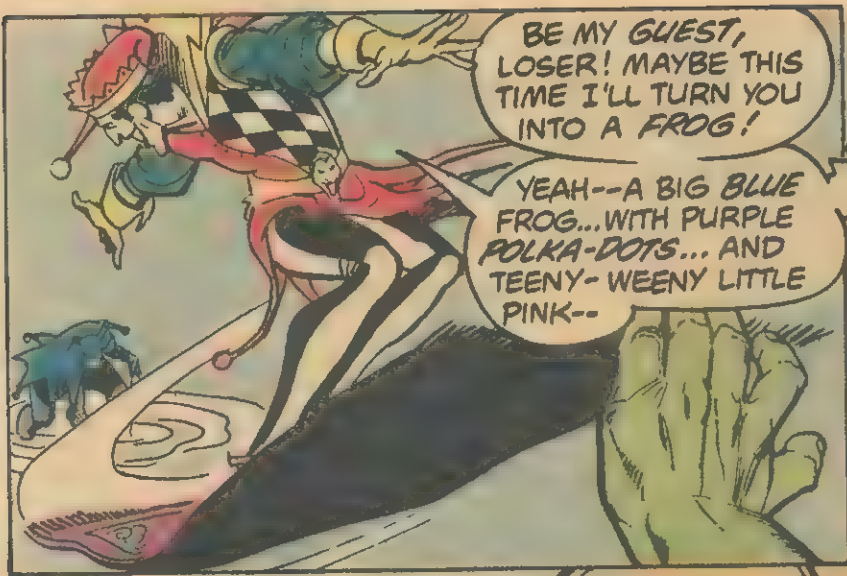
APPROPRIATE, WOULDN'T YOU SAY--  
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED!

BETTER LICK THE MARSHMALLOW  
OFF YOUR STICKY FINGERS AND  
GO HOME!

FACE IT, FELLA--  
AS OF NOW,  
YOU'RE OUT OF  
YOUR LEAGUE!

NO WAY, MANIAC! ONCE  
I GET FREE OF THIS GLOP,  
I'M GOING AFTER  
YOU!







WHY, BATMAN--  
WHATEVER DO  
YOU MEAN?

COME ON, JOKER-- SURELY A MAN  
WITH YOUR BOUNDLESS IMAGINATION  
COULD HAVE COME UP WITH SOME-  
THING MORE INVENTIVE!

THIS  
WORLD OF  
YOURS LOOKS LIKE  
SOMETHING OUT OF  
"ALICE IN WONDERLAND"!

"ALICE IN  
WONDERLAND"?

WHAT AN  
ENCHANTING  
IDEA.

AND WITH THE  
JOKER, THE IDEA  
IS ALL HE NEEDS!

YOU'RE RIGHT,  
TWEEDLE-BATS--  
THIS IS MUCH  
BETTER!

OFF  
WITH  
THEIR  
HEADS!

HUH?

BAH! STUPID  
CARD-MEN!  
IT IS NOT SMART  
TO THREATEN  
HULK!

THIS IS  
SILLY,  
JOKER!

AREN'T YOU A  
LITTLE TOO OLD  
TO BELIEVE IN  
FAIRY TALES?



I GAVE YOU CREDIT FOR  
BEING MORE OF AN ARTIST!

OH--SO IT'S  
ART YOU WANT  
NOW, IS IT?

HOW ABOUT  
SOMETHING  
LIKE THIS?

THIS ISN'T  
ART,  
JOKER--

--THIS IS  
MADNESS!

WRONG-A-  
ROO, BATS  
OL' BOY!

HAHAHAHA

THIS IS  
MADNESS!

WHAT--?!  
HE'S TURNED  
THE WHOLE WORLD  
UPSIDE-DOWN!

FIX IT,  
WHITE-FACE--  
NOW!

FIX IT--OR  
HULK WILL  
SMASH!!





--AND HARDER--

--STRAINING HIS  
IMAGINATION  
HARDER--

AND WITH THAT, THE CRIME  
CLOWN OPENS THE FLOODGATES  
OF HIS MIND--TRYING ONE  
REALITY AFTER ANOTHER--  
TWISTING AND CHANGING  
THE WORLD AT HIS  
WHIM--

BUT  
WHERE DO  
I BEGIN?

WITH  
PLEASURE,  
SMARTY-  
PANTS!

ANYTHING,  
JOKER!  
THEN  
PROVE  
IT!

ANYTHING MY  
MIND CAN CONCEIVE  
BECOMES INSTANT  
REALITY!

BEING  
OMNIPOTENT  
DOES HAVE ITS  
LITTLE  
ADVANTAGES!

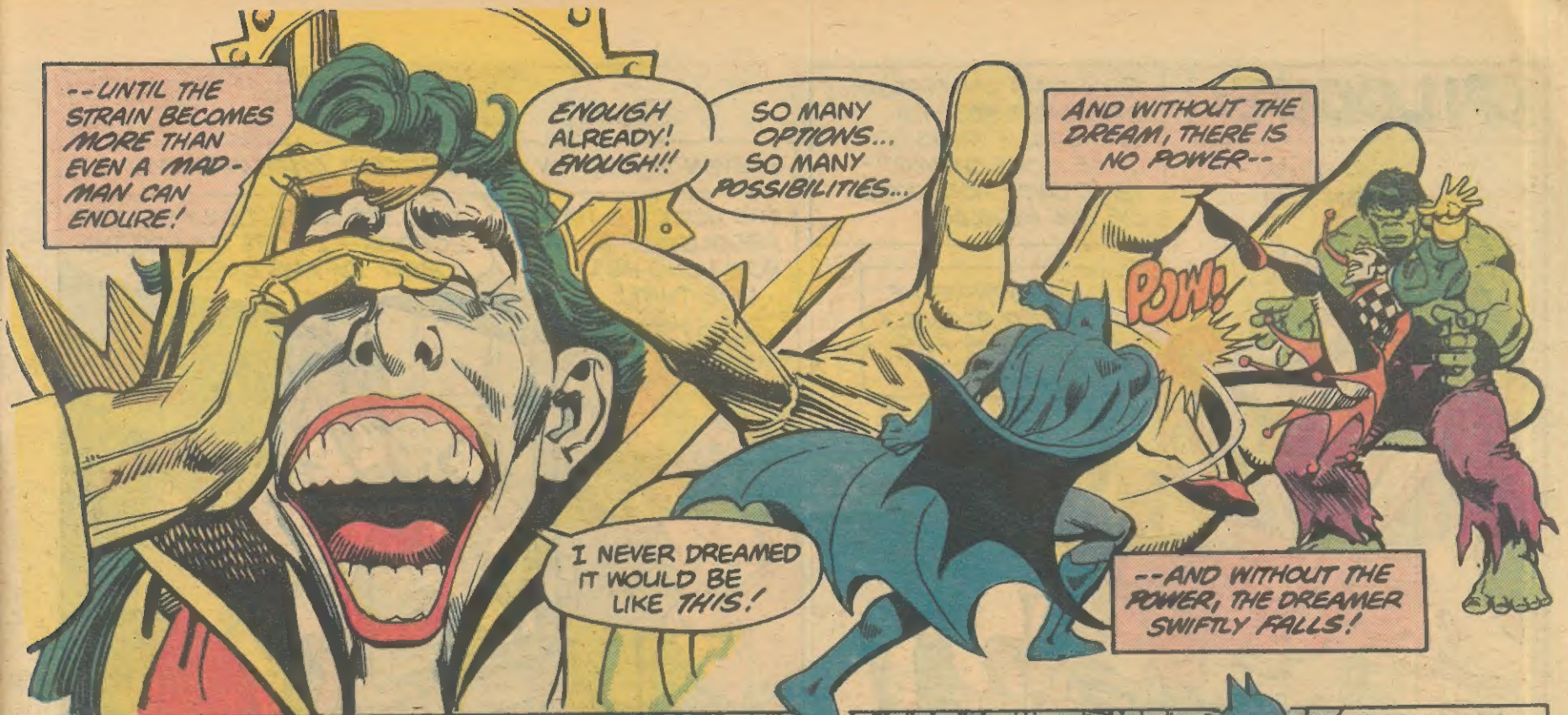
HUH? WHAT  
HAS WHITE-FACE  
DONE TO HULK  
NOW?

--THE ART  
OF A  
GENIUS!

THEN PERHAPS  
YOU'D PREFER  
ART AGAIN--

TOO MUCH FOR  
YOUR DELICATE  
STOMACHS,  
BOYS?





--UNTIL THE STRAIN BECOMES MORE THAN EVEN A MAD-MAN CAN ENDURE!

ENOUGH ALREADY! ENOUGH!!

SO MANY OPTIONS... SO MANY POSSIBILITIES...

AND WITHOUT THE DREAM, THERE IS NO POWER--

I NEVER DREAMED IT WOULD BE LIKE THIS!

POW!

--AND WITHOUT THE POWER, THE DREAMER SWIFTLY FALLS!



THE JOKER LAPSES INTO BLISSFUL UNCONSCIOUSNESS--

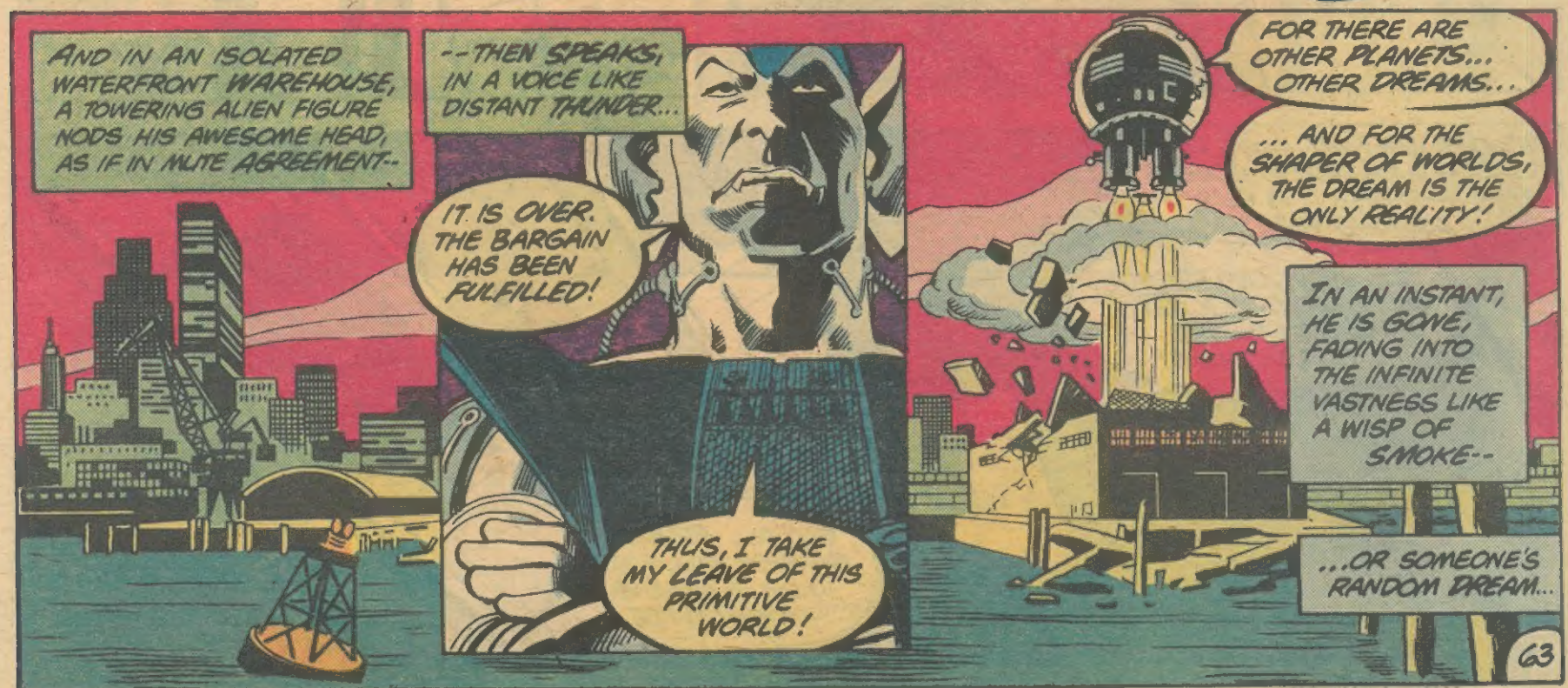
--AND ALL IS RIGHT WITH THE WORLD ONCE MORE--

--OR AT LEAST AS CLOSE AS IT EVER GETS!

BUT HE WAS WRONG, MY BIG GREEN FRIEND!

BAH! STUPID WHITE-FACE THOUGHT HE COULD BEAT HULK!

WHEN IT CAME RIGHT DOWN TO IT, THE JOKER COULDN'T EVEN BEAT HIMSELF!



AND IN AN ISOLATED WATERFRONT WAREHOUSE, A TOWERING ALIEN FIGURE NODS HIS AWESOME HEAD, AS IF IN MUTE AGREEMENT--

--THEN SPEAKS, IN A VOICE LIKE DISTANT THUNDER--

IT IS OVER. THE BARGAIN HAS BEEN FULFILLED!

THIS, I TAKE MY LEAVE OF THIS PRIMITIVE WORLD!

FOR THERE ARE OTHER PLANETS... OTHER DREAMS...

... AND FOR THE SHAPER OF WORLDS, THE DREAM IS THE ONLY REALITY!

IN AN INSTANT, HE IS GONE, FADING INTO THE INFINITE VASTNESS LIKE A WISP OF SMOKE--

...OR SOMEONE'S RANDOM DREAM...



# EPILOGUE:

RECLINING MAJESTICALLY, THE JOKER SITS HIS GROTESQUE THRONE, ONCE MORE OMNIPOTENT, ONCE MORE KING OF THE WORLD...

EVERYTHING HE COULD POSSIBLY DESIRE IS HIS AT LAST--

--EVEN IF ONLY IN HIS DEMENTED IMAGINATION!

THE DOCTORS HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA HOW LONG HE'LL BE LIKE THAT!

FOR HIS SAKE, COMMISSIONER GORDON-- I HOPE IT'S FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE!

I AGREE, BRUCE-- AT LEAST NOW HIS DREAM IS A HAPPY ONE!

AND SPEAKING OF DREAMS, WHAT ABOUT THIS SHAPER CHARACTER YOU MENTIONED?

NONE-- NOT EVEN A TRACE OF HIS WAREHOUSE!

IT SIMPLY CEASED TO EXIST AFTER THE SHAPER DEPARTED!

ANY SIGN OF HIM?

THEN OUR ONLY PROBLEM NOW IS WHAT TO DO ABOUT YOU, DOCTOR BAN-- EH?

YES... I KNOW.

BETTER GET OUT AN A.P.B. ON HIM RIGHT--

NO, JIM-- LET HIM GO.

WE OWE HIM THAT MUCH AT LEAST-- A CHANCE TO SOMEDAY FIND WHATEVER IT IS HE'S LOOKING FOR!

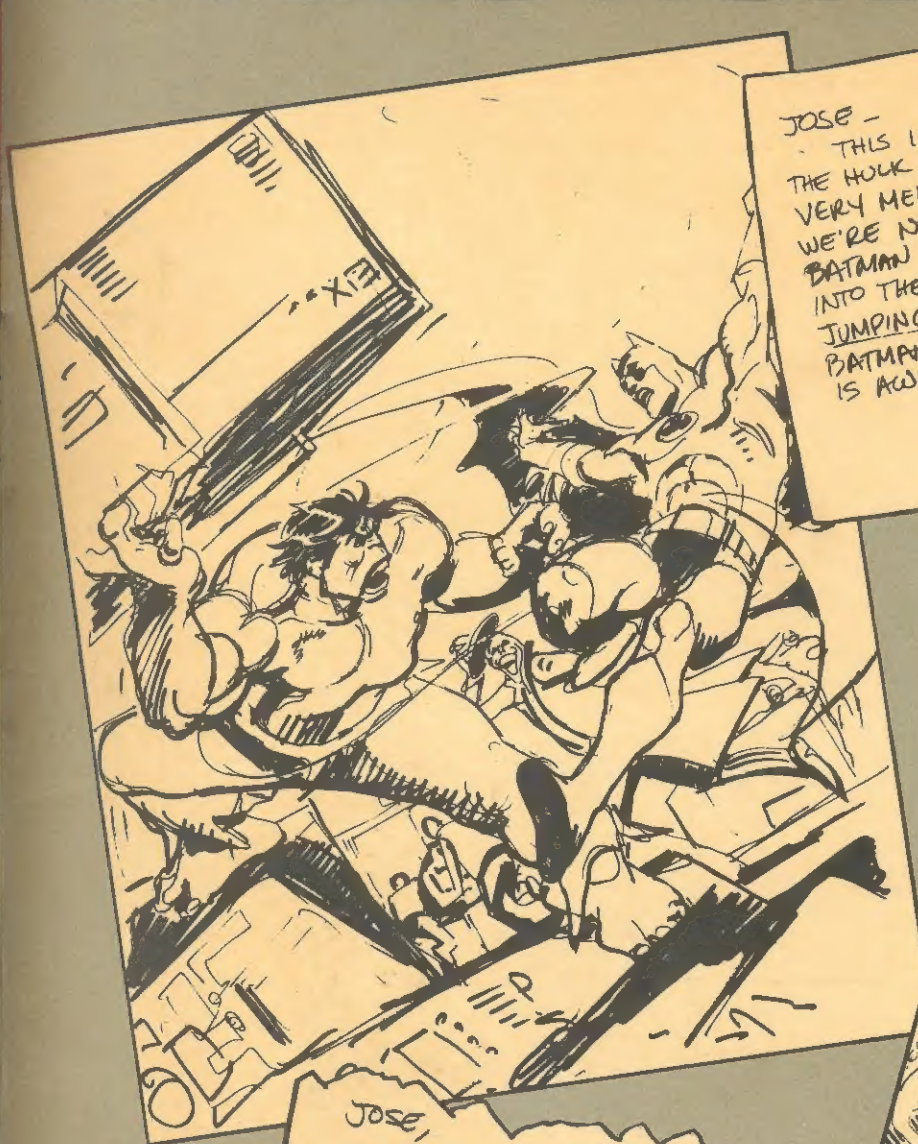
YOU KNOW, OLD FRIEND-- WE'RE LUCKY IN A WAY. AT LEAST WE HAVE OUR DREAMS!

BUT ALL BRUCE BANNER WILL EVER KNOW IS A LIVING NIGHTMARE!

THE END-- FOR NOW!



# EVOLUTION OF A COVER

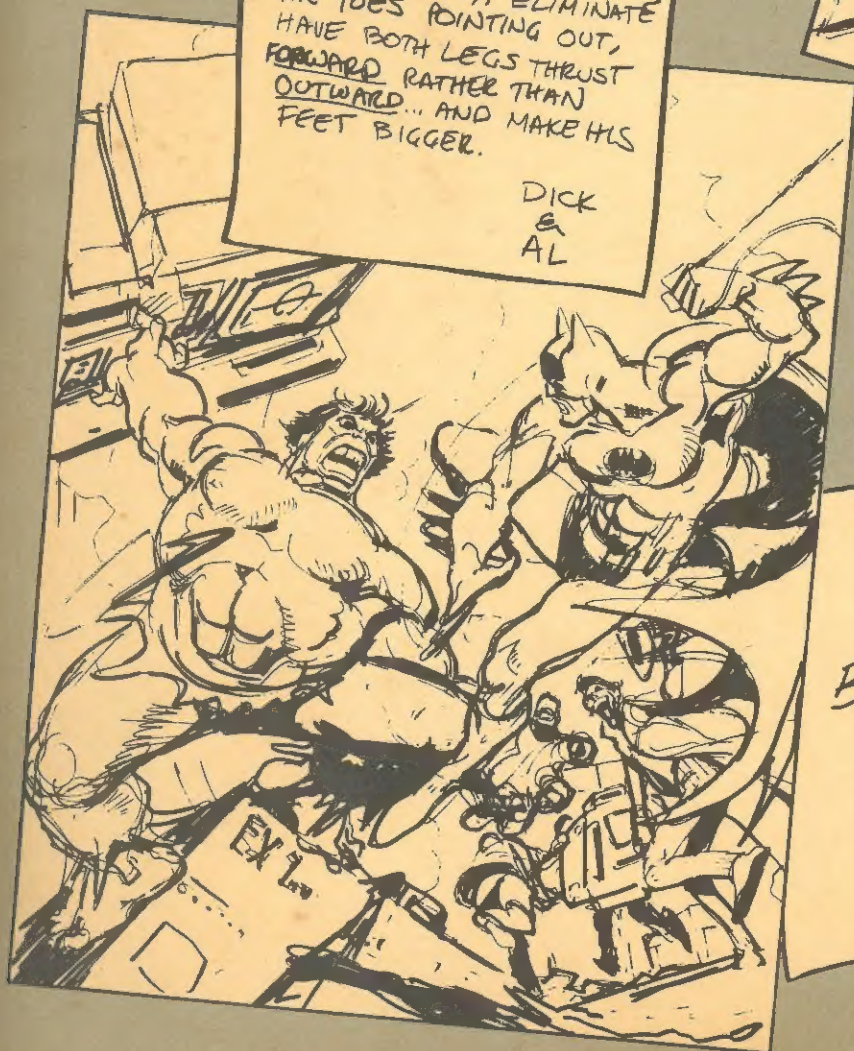


JOSE -  
THIS ISN'T RIGHT!  
THE HULK DOESN'T LOOK  
VERY MENACING AND  
WE'RE NOT SURE IF  
BATMAN IS SWINGING  
INTO THE PICTURE OR  
JUMPING IN. ALSO  
BATMAN'S RIGHT LEG  
IS AWKWARD.  
DICK GIORDANO  
& AL MILGROM

JOSE,  
BATMAN IS PERFECT! SO  
IS THE REST OF THE  
COVER, EXCEPT...  
THE HULK! THOUGH HE  
LOOKS A BIT MORE  
MENACING THAN THE  
FIRST DRAFT, THE  
FORESHORTENING ON HIS  
TORSO AND HIS "PAINTY"  
LEFT FOOT JUST DOESN'T  
LOOK RIGHT.  
DICK G.  
AL & M.

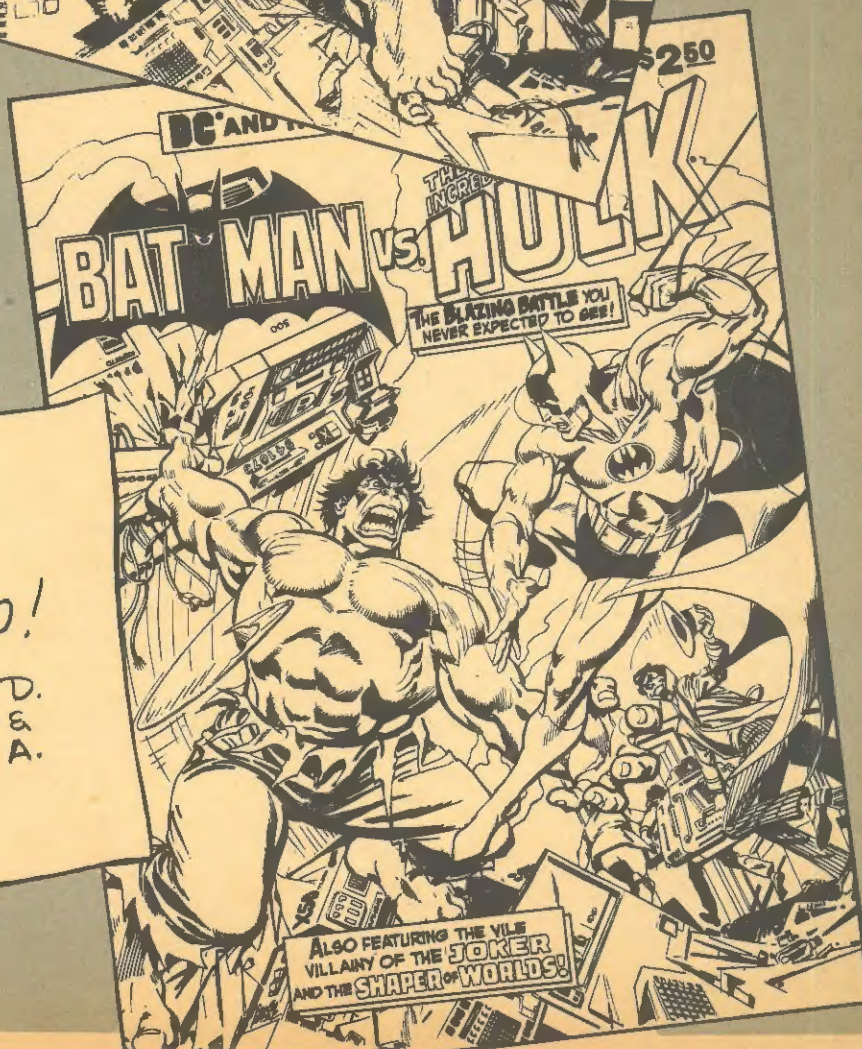


JOSE,  
GREAT! EXCEPT FOR THE  
HULK'S LEGS... THEY'RE  
STILL CLUMSY. ELIMINATE  
THE TOES POINTING OUT,  
HAVE BOTH LEGS THRUST  
FORWARD RATHER THAN  
OUTWARD... AND MAKE HIS  
FEET BIGGER.  
DICK  
& AL



BINGO!

D.  
& A.







**THE MIGHTY MAN-BRUTE AND  
THE MASKED MANHUNTER--  
SIDE-BY-SIDE AGAINST  
THEIR GREATEST FOES!**

